



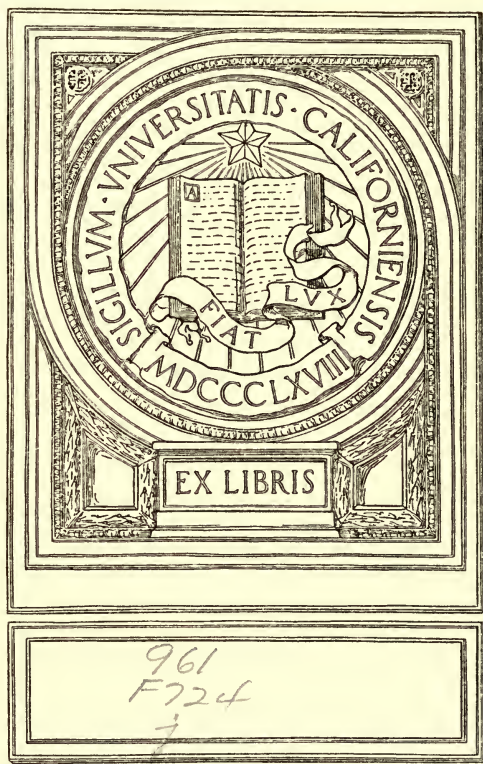
JOURNEYS END

JUSTUS MILES FORMAN



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Felix Trautmann





JOURNEY'S END

By
Justus Miles Forman









“ Molly ”



K. J. Lawrence

“ Miss Evelyn Berkeley ”

Journeys End

A Romance of To-day



BY

JUSTUS MILES FORMAN

//

Illustrated by Karl J. Anderson

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To the real Evelyn Berkeley

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CONTENTS



	PAGE
Chapter I.	3
Chapter II.	17
Chapter III.	37
Chapter IV.	51
Chapter V.	71
Chapter VI.	81
Chapter VII.	91
Chapter VIII.	103
Chapter IX.	113
Chapter X.	131
Chapter XI.	149
Chapter XII.	163
Chapter XIII.	181
Chapter XIV.	193
Chapter XV.	203
Chapter XVI.	223



LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Molly	<i>Frontispiece</i>
Miss Evelyn Berkeley	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
"The ragged sky line of New York"	18
"What Evelyn Berkeley wants is a play," said the actor"	40
Calthrop sees the "church parade" on Fifth Avenue	44
"She was coming in"	54
"Half a notion that they had met before"	56
"The notion of trying to write a play began to possess him"	60
"All the sights and sounds and smells that were inalienably home!"	66
"You don't know what exile is, Mr. Cal- throp!"	96
"You'll be missing Mr. Carter, sir, 'e was such a nice, larky sort of young gentleman'"	132

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS—*Continued*

	FACING PAGE
“The red-haired young woman . . . gave a sudden smothered cry. ‘Miss—Miss Berkeley—something dreadful has hap- pened ’”	152
“Something Elizabethan to sing ancient love songs to”	164
“Came smiling upon the stage with the tall figure of Cecil Calthrop at her side” .	184
“Ordered a ruinously extravagant bunch of pink roses”	204
“Found himself standing in the rear of a crowded theatre”	206
“Led Miss Berkeley upon the stage” . . .	214
“He had left orders for all the newspapers to be brought to his room early, and he read them”	224

CHAPTER I





CHAPTER I

OUT on deck it was raining, and the wind had risen with the sea until it tore shrieking past the open companionway amidships and brought up the boom and rush of the waters under the bow. There was a misty circle of white about each of the swaying masthead lights, and the deck planks shone dispiritingly where the glow from the electrics fell upon them.

Young Calthrop paused in the companionway and buttoned his rain-coat under his chin and pulled down his cap. It was warm and bright and comfortable inside. The men loafing about the stair-rail where the steamer rugs hung called out to him cheerily, and from the music-room forward

he heard the little white and gold piano tinkling and the nice voice of the pretty young Canadian girl, who had eyes like turquoises, singing "The Bonnie, Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond." But Calthrop seemed not to be quite in the mood for fishing stories, nor for Scotch music, nor for the warm comfort of the cabin, for he stepped out upon the deserted deck and made his way forward as far as the promenade deck extended, till he stood by the big ship's bell under the bridge, where the wind beat the breath back into his throat and nostrils, and stung his eyes, and snapped the skirts of his long coat behind his legs like a whip-lash. He watched the bow sink in a smother of dim gray foam and heave up again toward the sky with a roar of great seas. He watched the foremast swing and plunge and quiver drunkenly, and followed with his eyes the

huge white-crested seas that swung into the little circle of light about the ship and out of it again with a vicious slap against the steel plates that they couldn't harm. And it seemed good to him—seemed to gratify an inner restlessness, soothe with its tumult a certain other insistent tumult that had been threatening all the day to engulf him. He thrust his face stubbornly against the wind and stared out before him into the wet gloom where lay that strange America of which he knew so little and hoped so much.

On clear evenings a great, clear-blazing star hung in the west—Venus, he well knew. He would have preferred Mars or Jupiter, or something else rather more symbolic of the strenuous life and of the great things he meant to do out yonder; but that couldn't be helped. He had stood every evening by the rail watching

that great star and wondering about the unknown land that lay beneath it. The star had seemed to give him courage, to brighten his hopes, to quicken his imagination till he was all brave eagerness for the struggle ahead of him; and the things back there in England where the smoke was going seemed already dim and pale and alien. But this day with its dispiriting fog and rain and wind, and this black, wet night, had seemed to take all the bravery out of him, had seemed to rob that land out in the west of all its bright allurements and to people it with disappointments and terrors. And the "things back there in England" had grown suddenly very dear and fresh in his mind, and consequential, till he was sick for the sight and feeling and smell of home; and very rebellious against the fate that had driven him out from it.

Young Calthrop's father, who was distant cousin to the Earl of Oxbridge and to the old Duke of Strope, had died some two months since of heart failure, superinduced partly—as afterward appeared—by financial worry, and partly by an unwise and wholly gratuitous attempt to surpass all former efforts at cursing the elder branch of his family and in particular the two above-mentioned gentlemen—which was a habit he had.

Everybody, including young Calthrop, had supposed that there would be a great deal of money, for although there were no entailed estates in the younger branch, there had always been more money than was needed to live upon even extravagantly, and the old gentleman just dead had been very successful in certain operations in the "city" a number of years before, more than doubling his patrimony.

But when, after the funeral in Brook Street, old Moxam, the family solicitor, had called the sole heir into the darkened study and had read the will and explained those recent disasters in American stocks, the boy began to realize that he was considerably worse off than the tailor in Bond Street who always smirked and rubbed his hands so obsequiously when you went into the shop, or than the bank clerk who dodged under your horse's nose to catch his penny 'bus.

"You will have," said old Moxam gently, "just about one hundred pounds a year—that is, if the town house here sells as it should, and if Sir Chester takes the place down in Devon." And the old man's voice shook just a little in spite of his hems and haws, for he had been attached to the Calthrops a great many years, and really loved the boy.

"One hundred quid a year!" said young Clathrop, "one hundred quid!" And he looked about the room in which they were sitting. He thought, with a gleam of amusement, of the salaries of some of the servants in the house. He thought of the big place down in Devonshire and of the shooting in Scotland. He thought also, but with no amusement, of the faces of the Earl of Oxbridge and the old Duke of Strobe when they heard the news.

"What am I going to do?" demanded young Calthrop. "One hundred pounds won't pay for my clothes."

The solicitor crossed his knees and looked away.

"I see nothing for it but to apply to your cousins for an annuity," he said. Young Calthrop dropped his hand rather sharply upon the big oak table.

"When I have tried driving an omni-

bus," said he, frowning, "and have failed at that, and when I have tried sweeping crossings and grown too weak, I may chuck myself off Waterloo Bridge or take poison, but I won't ask money or anything else of either Oxbridge or the Duke, and you know it, too."

The old man breathed a little sigh that might have been relief.

"Why, then," he cried cheerfully, "we'll have to think up something else. It will mean work, my boy, work of some sort, but we'll arrange somehow. Take a day or two for thinking it over and then we'll have another talk."

The young man, leaning over the rail, face to wind, stirred uneasily and took a very long breath as his mind ran back over that "day or two" of thinking it over. It hadn't been a pleasant day or two. Moxam had been like a father, he remem-

bered; good old Moxam had done everything that a man could do to set him on his feet, and had, at the last, almost wept when the boy took his sudden decision to chuck it all up and go out to America, where, he had been given to understand, fortunes lay about the streets, impeding traffic. He tried to look back judiciously upon this decision, to consider it with perfect impartiality, and he could not see that it had been anything but imperative. Perhaps it was cowardly to cut and run, but he hadn't the courage to stop there, where every one knew him, and go into a bank—he had an idea that if you went into a bank they sent you about on errands with a book chained to you—or become a solicitor's clerk, or anything else of that low nature.

He pictured himself—in that day or two—rushing about the “city” with that

book chained to him, meeting here and there some man who would know him, look back over his shoulder at him, and stroll on, shaking his head with a vague sort of pity. He pictured himself taking a stroll in the park of a bank holiday, or venturing into the church parade at the corner and receiving embarrassed commiserating nods from the women at whose houses he had been used to lounge or dance.

No, that sort of a thing was out of the question. He couldn't bear that. He would cut it all, he had decided—go out to America and make a fortune, no matter how, selling things over a counter if need be. He had a friend out there somewhere, in New York, he believed, a chap he had known at Cambridge, son of a certain very well known writer and Birthday Knight. This chap had quarreled with his governor and cut away on his own hand. He would

write to him, he determined, ask him to look up some sort of situation, and then—why, then he would go out there and forget (till the fortune should be made) that there was any such place as England, any such things as Piccadilly and Pall Mall, as clubs and restaurants, as shooting in the autumn, as gorse and heather and may—— Ah, well, never mind all that!

And so here he was at last, with England far behind him in the dark and his face turned steadfastly toward that America where lay the fortune he was to make. The other chap's letter, Strothers' letter answering his own, had not been quite as enthusiastic as he could have wished, but then Strothers was probably picking up some of that curious Yankee shrewdness and caution that the newspapers talked of so much. Anyhow, Strothers or no Strothers, the die was cast, and in two

days he was to step upon the soil of the Western Hemisphere.

The wind began to make his teeth chatter, and he turned about slowly to go back into the cabin. A gust of rain struck him in the neck and trickled down inside his collar, but he squared his good shoulders and drove back the shiver with a disgusted growl.

"Anyhow," said he philosophically, "it will be something of a lark." But the shoulders dropped again. "If only it weren't for Molly!" said young Calthrop.

CHAPTER II

CHAPTER II

STROTHERS was not at the pier to meet him. Instead, a letter was brought on board with the quarantine and customs officers, in the bay, saying that Strothers had been suddenly sent off to Chicago by the house for which he was working. He hoped to return in a fortnight, but meanwhile recommended his lodging-place in West Twenty-fourth Street to Calthrop. He said it was not ornamental, but very central and reasonably cheap. Calthrop had not been in the way of looking up "reasonably cheap" things of any nature, but he realized with a sigh that from this time onward everything must be cheap.

He looked up from the letter to admire

the Goddess of Liberty on her little island and to gaze at the great city which was coming into view. A slight mist hung over the water and hid the low-lying objects on shore. Above it towered the ragged sky line of New York, with its steeples and sky-scraping office buildings.

Calthrop thought the effect rather fine. It seemed to him exactly like Mount St. Michel, though of course much bigger, and he turned to say so to one of the men near by, but this gentleman, a home-coming clergyman, was performing an impromptu and most surprising dance on the deck, and beating a fellow-voyager over the back with an umbrella, the while he assured him that there wasn't any country like it in the world. The other man, whose actions were equally surprising, said no, there wasn't; he'd be damned if there was. Calthrop moved



"THE RAGGED SKY LINE OF NEW YORK."

away in some alarm. He had never seen any one act that way before—except at Henley, and then there was some excuse.

At the pier he was still more alarmed, and had at one time serious thoughts of sending a messenger boy to the office of the British Consul, for the customs officers—he had fancied he was done with them on board—seemed to have taken him for an especially lawless and dangerous smuggler. They asked him a great many absurd questions, and pried about in his boxes as if they suspected him of designs upon the President of the United States.

He took a cab, a four-wheeler—the tariff made him gasp—“Eight shillings for a two-mile course!” he cried. “Good Lord, a breakfast ought to cost a guinea!”—and drove up to Twenty-fourth Street. At the number Strothers had given him all the rooms were let, but the maid, a negress,

recommended the house next door, where Calthrop found, to his astonished delight, an English woman installed, a relic of Russell Square, Bloomsbury, who wept and praised God at his crisp English speech, and curtsied and said, "Thank you, sir," with a freedom lavish enough to have made her American lodgers turn faint.

There was a two-pair-back vacant, a fairly large square room, with an outlook upon two great alder trees in the rear area, that hid the clothes lines and ash tins beneath. The woman declared that the room had never before been let for less than six dollars a week—"Twenty-four bob," said Calthrop, mentally—"but you shall 'ave it, sir, for five. That's a sovereign."

Calthrop said at once that he would take it, but asked where he was to sleep, and was greatly astonished when the

woman laid hold of a high chest of drawers with a mirror in the centre, and pulled it down upon the floor, transforming it into a bed.

“By Jove, you know!” he cried, “but they’re clever, these Yankees! Fancy sleeping in the back side of a chest of drawers, with a mirror under you! Is there anything that falls over and makes a tea-table or a bath?” And Mrs. Stubbs proved her nationality by shaking her head gravely and showing him the little wash-room, with hot and cold water, that opened near the bed-chiffonier, and the electric bell to call a servant. She promised to send up a tea-tray in an hour—it was four of the afternoon—and waddled heavily downstairs, for she was fat, to boast to the advertising agent and his yellow-haired wife who occupied the parlour floor of the imposing young gentle-

man "stright from Myfair" who was to honour her roof.

The first three days were very trying. Young Calthrop was greatly at a loss as to how to proceed. He had so confidently expected the assistance and advice of the departed Strothers that he had taken no pains to find out anything about the character or geography of New York. Strothers in his hasty letter had mentioned two or three mercantile houses which were, he believed, in need of clerks, and one political gentleman with an address somewhere east, who being under certain obligations to Strothers might put Strothers' friend in the way of something good. But when young Calthrop called at these places and on the political friend—whom he thought a very curious person indeed to be high in the ranks of a great municipal government—and further upon certain

other business concerns whose advertisements, "Help Wanted," he cut out of the morning newspapers, he seemed not to be treated with proper seriousness.

The men, heads of departments or even proprietors, took their cigars out of their mouths and stared at young Calthrop's smartly cut morning coat and at his shining hat and at the stick in his hands, and explained, with an amused look in their eyes, that what they wanted, if anything at all, was just a plain common man or boy to do clerical work at clerical wages; and when Calthrop protested that he was just a plain common man who wanted clerical work to do, they only laughed, and shook their heads humourously at him, which made him turn red with embarrassment.

Some of them asked him, in a perfunctory sort of way, what experience he had had

in their especial line of work, and when he admitted no experience at all and professed great willingness to learn, they seemed annoyed and as if they regretted having wasted a moment's time upon him.

All this was tremendously discouraging; he had expected something so different; it made him very sore and sick at heart and, at low moments, despondent. This was generally at evening when he had nothing to do, and was reduced to sitting forlornly in his room or walking up and down Broadway, where the theatres shone brightly behind their illuminated signs, and men stood in argumentative knots under the names, in great electric letters, of certain once-celebrated prize-fighters who had retired to more peaceable and profitable pursuits. At such times his mind would be miserably full of a certain other life out across the sea. He would

think, striking the pavement savagely with his stick, of what all the people he knew would be doing at just this hour of the evening; of the good quiet dinners at certain clubs which he had been wont to frequent, or at the Carleton or Prince's, and of going on to something later—Mr. Wyndam's new piece in Leicester Square, or the musical comedy at Daly's, or the Shaftesbury, or perhaps for a nice comfortable after-dinner hour at some house where he was informally welcome, before looking in at a dance to finish the night.

He stared at the smart-looking people who were stepping out of their broughams into the theatres, or out of clanging trams—no, street cars; there weren't any trams here. He couldn't understand how women dressed like that could bring themselves to go out in common twopence-

ha'penny street cars, with shop-girls and Italian labourers and worse, and he compared them rather indignantly and very unjustly with the people going into the theatres at home, and made unpleasant remarks about them to himself, for all of which he was later on abjectly ashamed.

Then one morning, the fourth morning, he dropped in, with small hope, upon a certain shop in Broadway where photographs of celebrities and of theatrical people and scenic views were sold. He had seen an advertisement in the morning paper to the effect that a salesman was desired here—one somewhat familiar with the business. Of course, Calthrop had never sold photographs of Mont Blanc and of temporarily celebrated ballet girls, but he had always taken a great interest in theatrical affairs and people, and knew many of the latter at home and on the

Continent. It seemed to him that he might be of service in this sort of thing.

The proprietor, a very pleasant looking foreigner, French by name, stared rather curiously at first at the well-dressed young man, much as the others had done, but when Calthrop showed such a familiarity with the names and personalities of various great people, theatrical and otherwise, and seemed to know so well the big photographers in London and Paris and Vienna and Berlin, he began to look upon him with increased respect. Then, too, his appearance very probably spoke in his favour, for he was a very fine looking boy and quite obviously a gentleman.

The proprietor asked him what wages he would expect, and explained that he had been paying twelve dollars a week to the salesman whom he had recently discharged, but that in consideration of

Calthrop's apparent qualifications he was prepared to offer fifteen. Calthrop turned red with relief and delight. Fifteen dollars was sixty shillings, and, in his present frame of mind, sixty shillings seemed a great deal of money. He reflected that the two-pair-back in Twenty-fourth Street cost but twenty shillings. Thus he would have forty more for his meals and other things, not to mention the hundred quid a year that could always be relied upon.

He made arrangements to begin work the following morning, and stepped out into the hot sunlight of Broadway, swinging his stick jauntily and with the proud consciousness of being a wage-earner. He went into the bar of the Fifth Avenue Hotel and treated himself to a brandy and soda on the strength of it all, and very solemnly drank to himself and the brilliant prospect of sixty bob a week.

The work at the photograph shop proved very easy and not at all unpleasant. The photographs were, for the most part, kept in a sort of file of small drawers, labeled outside with the name of the dramatic star or statesman or danseuse or famous military man, as the case might be. A few of the more recent portraits were exhibited in showcases or in the window. He spent the first few days familiarizing himself with the files, and found himself able to suggest, out of his knowledge of the large houses abroad, a great many important additions to the stock, till the delighted proprietor was on the point of raising his salary in sheer gratification. Being a Frenchman, however, he stopped just short of doing so.

He made the conquest of the heart of the plain-faced, red-haired young woman who was his coworker on the first day—

so complete a conquest that the proprietor was compelled more than once to request her to leave off leaning upon the counter and staring at young Calthrop, in favour of unpacking the last importation of goods.

And then in looking over the stock of pictures, Calthrop came upon a great number of portraits of *Her*. It seemed that she was just finishing her first year as a star, and these large pictures on the big gray cards had been made of her in the quaint, old-fashioned costumes that she had worn in the very popular play. Calthrop had seen her in London two or three years before, where she had played small parts in the company of a certain very great English actor, and had thought her about the loveliest young woman he had ever seen—with one exception. He had read in the papers of her tremendous success as a star, but his own troubles

had put all such things out of his mind. He looked up her name on the file and took the little drawer out upon the counter. Many of the portraits had been taken in London, some of them in the characters that he remembered, and they were all very charming and most beautiful; but he preferred the later ones, the big ones on the gray cards, taken when she was a star, in queer, flaring skirts and old-time coiffure, and rosebuds in her soft hair.

The plain young woman saw him looking at the pictures and came over to his side.

"Isn't she the most beautiful thing you ever saw?" cried the plain young woman; "and they say she is just as lovely as she is beautiful. Half the men in New York would like to die for her, though it would be so much more to the point if they'd live for her. She's only twenty-one years old, too! Think of it! Oh, it must be nice

to be beautiful!" she said with a little sigh.

"Yes," agreed Calthrop, looking into the eyes of the young girl in the picture; "it must be nice to be as beautiful as that."

"I do hope," continued the young woman with the red hair, "that she'll have a good play for next year. Not that 'The Horse Guards' isn't a good play; it is, of course. It's one of the prettiest, funniest little plays I ever saw; but—well, Miss Berkeley can do so much more! She hasn't half a chance in 'The Horse Guards.' Ah," cried the plain young woman, "why doesn't some one write a play for her who isn't just a clever dramatist? Why doesn't some one who loves her, who feels her capabilities for sweetness and for strength, write her a play; with no one else in mind but her, with just her face to keep up his inspiration?"

I'm not sure, but I think she could be great then."

Young Mr. Calthrop smiled gently down into the beautiful face on the big gray card, and the face seemed to him to smile in return, very slightly, rather questioningly.

"Now, I—" said he with a sort of grave mockery, "I might write her a play. I used always to be writing plays in my 'varsi—when I was a youngster, and I think I'm rapidly falling in love with her, too, or at least with this picture of her—the one sitting down, in the white dress and the rosebuds, and just beginning to smile at you. Yes, I think I shall write a play for her."

The plain young woman with the red hair laughed appreciatively and moved away to attend to a customer, but young Calthrop wrapped something carefully in

white paper and made out a sale cheque for one dollar and a half, which was cost price for the large pictures of Miss Evelyn Berkeley—those on the gray cards.

And that evening he went to see "The Horse Guards" at the Lyric Theatre.

CHAPTER III

CHAPTER III

THE heavy-eyed young man who lived in the room above knocked at Calthrop's half-opened door and said "May I come in? I wanted to borrow a match," he explained further as he entered. "The old girl's pretty close on matches"—Calthrop judged the "old girl" to be the relic of Bloomsbury.

"Seems like such near neighbours ought to get acquainted, anyway," pursued the visitor. "Say, these wax matches are all right, ain't they? London make?"

"Yes," said young Calthrop; "Bryant May's vestas. I don't fancy wooden matches; they go out."

The young man with the heavy eyes

tilted his very bad cigar at an aggressive angle in one corner of his mouth and strolled about the room with his hands in his pockets. He noted with a quick eye the row of photographs in gold frames along the mantel, photographs of a sort of people with which he had never come in contact. He called them "swells." He noted the silver brushes and bottles and flasks on the dressing-stand and the various little articles of luxury about the room that fitted so oddly into a Twenty-fourth Street lodging-house.

He dropped into the rocking-chair that the Englishman had pushed out for him, and carefully adjusted the knees of his trousers, a proceeding which young Calthrop witnessed with the greatest interest.

"You don't happen to be in the professional line?" said he.

"Professional?" inquired Calthrop. "Oh, I see, theatrical. No, I am not an actor. I sell photographs of them, however, in a shop over on Broadway."

The visitor gasped slightly and ventured another glance at the photographs and silver toilet articles.

"Oh—ah, yes," said he. "Yes, of course. Somehow I had an idea that you were an actor. You look like one."

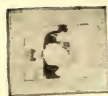
"Oh," said young Calthrop.

"I'm with Horne down at the Fourteenth Street," volunteered the American. "Small part," he added loftily, "but I threw over a fat thing uptown. They didn't treat me well, tried to do me, but I wouldn't stand for it. Professional jealousy," he sighed, shaking his head. "Professional jealousy is the devil!" His tone would seem to indicate that he had suffered much and deeply therefrom.

"What do you think," he demanded presently, "of the New York stage?"

"Well, you know, I've not seen anything but 'The Horse Guards,' " said Calthrop, "but I think that was very jolly. Miss Berkeley's worth going a long way to see, isn't she?"

"Evelyn Berkeley," said the visitor impressively, "is the best—you hear me? the best! Why, man, she's nothing but a kid yet, *only* twenty or twenty-one, but she has possibilities that no one can see the end of. She's a beauty, she was pretty nearly born on the stage—and that signifies a lot—and further than that, she's got a soul. There's no end to what that young woman will be able to do—if she don't marry or lose her head or some such foolishness. The papers are always engaging her to somebody, you know. Now, what Evelyn Berkeley wants is



“‘WHAT EVELYN BERKELEY WANTS IS A PLAY,’ SAID THE ACTOR.”



a play, Calthrop. Oh, I'm not saying that 'The Horse Guards' isn't well enough; it's a good play, a pretty one and a dainty one. It's had a great run, and a good man wrote it, but it's not up to her, not by a darned sight! She's good for something bigger. If I knew a man who could write a good play, do you know what I'd say to him? I'd say, 'Jones, you sit down at your desk and you stick up in front of you one of these big 'Horse Guards' pictures of Evelyn Berkeley, and you look at it till you don't see anything else and don't think of anything else, and then you write a play around that girl! You write the heart and soul straight out of you and it'll make both you and her great!' That's what I'd say to him. That's what Evelyn Berkeley needs—a play written up to her. Talk about your Mary Andersons! You wait ten years and see what becomes of

Evelyn Berkeley if she can get the vehicle to carry her where she belongs!"

Young Calthrop thought of the plain, red-haired young woman in the photograph shop.

"I'd jolly well like to be the chap to do it," said he.

"Of course you would!" the American said; "so would I, and so would many another poor devil, but we can't do it. Somebody will, though; you wait and see. Ah, well, I must be going on. I've a date to keep. Come up and see me sometime. I'm on the floor above. And, I say, let me fix you out with a pass to our piece some night; it's not a bad show. So long! See you again." And he stamped noisily out and up the stairs.

"Queer lot, that chap!" said Calthrop, lighting his pipe afresh. "Now, at home, I'd pick him for a shocking bounder, but

you can't tell about these Americans, they're so peculiar."

But the "queer lot" up in his three-pair-back was knotting a cravat of blazing red, and saying to himself that he must manage to see a good deal of that young Englishman for the sake of the accent. He had been struggling for some months now, with weird results, to acquire the English accent employed by his star, but he had certain well-founded suspicions that the star's speech was not quite the real thing. Indeed, if the truth were told, it was, if suggestive of anything transatlantic, faintly redolent of Whitechapel and the old Kent Road.

Calthrop finished with the great heap of illustrated Sunday newspapers which had been affording him a new and unbounded delight, and got into a frock coat for a stroll. He went over through

Twenty-fourth Street to Madison Square, and being by this time fairly well grounded in the city's geography, turned up the Avenue.

There seemed to be no end of people out, though it was nearly the last of June and a warm day, and they were very interesting people. Calthrop had never seen so many really beautiful women together in all his life—all sorts of women, for they were obviously of many classes. It seemed as if there must be some sort of competition in progress and as if Fifth Avenue were the ring. He found himself looking about humourously for the judges' stand.

They dressed well, too, he noted approvingly, rather more like French women than English, and they all seemed to have beautiful figures. "I think I'm glad I came," said young Calthrop, with a pleased little laugh.



CALTHROP SEES THE CHURCH PARADE ON FIFTH AVENUE.



He noticed that as he went farther out the Avenue the quality of the crowd improved. There were fewer ladies who favoured him with sidelong glances and who held their skirts too tightly about them; but more of the sort to remind him of "Church Parade" at home, who held their chins well up in the air and talked to their companions in sweet, high voices and had no eyes for the passersby.

But it was the men who surprised him most. They fitted so oddly into this throng of lovely and wonderfully groomed women. They seemed undersized for the most part, and very pale and anæmic. They walked badly, as if not used to exercise, and their clothes were dreadful, Calthrop thought. Some of them, though comparatively few, were in the conventional frock coat and "topper," but such coats! and upon such figures! And most

of them were in the lounge jacket and bowler hat or straw-boater that Calthorp had been taught to believe were designed for wear in the country or while traveling. He didn't care at all for the men.

They made him uncomfortable, too, by staring at him—both the men and the women—as if he were something strange and unusual. He could tell by the sound of their footsteps upon the stone pavement that many of them turned to look back after they had passed. Of course all this annoyed him greatly, and reduced him to fumbling nervously at his cravat to see if that could be out of place, and to glancing covertly at his boots, and even to taking off his hat and inspecting its unblemished surface.

“Now, what the deuce is the matter with me?” he wondered. “I can't see that anything's out of the way.” It did not

occur to him that the people's stares might be of admiration for his extremely handsome face and good figure, and, perhaps, by curiosity at his very smartly made and unmistakably English coat.

He walked far out the Avenue, past the Cathedral of St. Patrick and across the plaza at Fifty-ninth Street, and along the edge of the Park, where the character of the strolling throng altered and became middle-class again, and turned into the Park at Eighty-third Street to watch the driving, over which he shook his head sadly.

"They've jolly good horses," said he, "and very fairly smart carriages, too—though where the fun comes in in driving about shut in a brougham I don't quite see; but, bless you, they can't drive."

He spoke to the red-haired young woman about it the next morning, but

the red-haired young woman confessed to knowing very little about horses or their government when in motion. She said that trolley cars were more in her line.

CHAPTER IV

CHAPTER IV

THE next fortnight passed very uneventfully. Strothers was still in Chicago, and, there seemed reason to believe, must be there till autumn. Carter, the actor of the three-pair-back, had left town with the closing of his star's season and was filling an engagement somewhere in the far West with a summer stock company.

The weather had turned very hot, hotter than Calthrop had ever experienced, and he suffered considerably from it. He was a bit worried, too, over the fear that he might be turned adrift during the dull season, for patronage at the photograph shop had markedly fallen off with the closing of the theatrical season and the general exodus to the seashore and mountains.

Seashore and mountains! Calthrop heard the customers in the shop talking together of them, of where they meant to go and how long stay, and how fine the surf was at this place or that, and how much the pure air had done for some one's malaria the year before.

Then Calthrop's mind would go all at a jump off to Dieppe or Ostend or Scheveningen, where the water was cold and the hotels big and gay and full of music—to Zermatt or Chamounix or Grindelwald or St. Moritz, where there was ice and snow uplift to blue skies, crevassed glaciers and dizzy cornices—and he would catch himself up sharply and blink an instant, and tell himself very severely just what a fool he was, and pull down another file of photographs for some one to disarrange.

He grew very well acquainted in these

long days with the plain, red-haired young woman, and became quite fond of her in a nice, friendly sort of way. She was a simple-minded soul, full of a queer, quaint philosophy, full of a quiet cheerfulness and contentment with her lot that was very good for Calthrop at just this stage. She told him much of her home and her two small brothers, twins, who were such jolly little housekeepers and took such care of the bedridden mother; of the good times they had on a Sunday or a holiday, all four together, and of their hopes for a little home in the country, up in Connecticut, when some tiresome litigation over an uncle's will should be past and they had come to their own.

And with all this she never asked nor seemed to expect confidences from young Calthrop, for which he was so grateful that he was much nicer to her than he otherwise

would have been, saved her little bits of work, and even took her, of an evening now and then, to one of the summer theatres, where there was cheap light opera or vaudeville and where one had no need to dress. He could not have done this if she had been a pretty girl or young, and he took it as almost a personal favour on her part that she had red hair and was plain and nearly thirty. The only thing that disturbed him was a curious way she had fallen into of late of watching him when she thought his attention was directed elsewhere, and of looking into his eyes sometimes when she was close beside him. He was the least bit uneasy over it, for he could not make it out. He was almost an unbelievably modest chap, and he thought that she disapproved of him for some hidden reason.

Then one morning, when the shop was



"SHE WAS COMING IN."



quite empty of customers, and Calthrop was leaning over the showcase absorbed in the London column of a newspaper, there was a sharp little "Oh-h-h! Look! Look!" from the red-haired young woman. Calthrop looked up quickly and the newspaper rustled unnoticed to the floor under his feet, for *She* was coming in at the door with a friend, a well-known young English actress, who had been during the season supporting a certain very great actor-manager on his American tour. The hansom cab in which the two had come stood waiting at the curb. She wanted a certain photograph of Sir Henry Irving in the character of Richard III., and Calthrop turned to take down the file with a queer weakness in his arms and a most embarrassing flush upon his face.

"But why?" he stormed inwardly. "For the Lord's sake, *why?* She isn't any-

thing to you, you ass! You've seen her at a distance several times and you've heard a lot of—of discussion about her. That's nothing to have a fit over. My aunt, what a beauty! Oh, buck up; don't be an ass!" and he frowned quite portentously as he spread out the photographs on the glass showcase.

His heart was pounding, nevertheless. He noted that her voice, at an ordinary conversational pitch, was even sweeter and softer and more curiously caressing than on the stage. And her hair was more bronzed. There was a great deal of reddish copper in it. Perhaps it was the faint, elusive scent from the hair as she leaned over the showcase that brought the pounding to young Calthrop's heart. More likely it was the eyes, though.

"Oh, don't be an ass!" begged young Calthrop of himself—inwardly. He felt



"HALF A NOTION THAT THEY HAD MET BEFORE."

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY
WASHINGTON, D. C.

very queer; possibly he was going to be ill. Certainly he had never felt quite this way before. No other woman had ever made his heart pound by merely being near him—no other, that is, with one exception.

He caught the young English woman looking at him very curiously now and then, as if she had half a notion that they had met before, but Calthrop only glanced politely past her and tried to appear quite the ordinary salesman in discharge of his duties, and not at all the young man who had sat beside her at dinner on two separate occasions in London.

They stopped a cruelly short time. She selected the photograph she wanted almost immediately and glanced with a deprecatory little smile at the large and conspicuously exposed pictures of herself, while Calthrop wrapped her purchase and made the change. Then she said "Thank you!"

and gave him a little nod, and they went out to their cab.

Young Calthrop watched them hungrily through the window, and wondered what they were talking about there on the curb, and wondered, too, how it would seem to get into a hansom with *Her* and go bowling smoothly out the Avenue and into the Park and far away from everything and everybody—very far away. He stood for a time considering this, and had changed the hansom to a victoria and Central Park to St. James or Hyde Park, when he was brought back to earth and sixty bob a week by the plain young woman with the red hair.

Meanwhile Miss Evelyn Berkeley was remarking to her companion, as the hansom paused in a momentary block of traffic:

“What a tremendously handsome young

Englishman that was in the shop! He looked rather out of his class, somehow."

"What? Yes, yes!" said the other young woman absently. "Yes, he has reminded me very much of a man I met once or twice in London last year. I've forgotten where; of course it wasn't the same man. My man was quite smart, and rather importantly connected—— Oh, I want to stop in at Louise's."

It was during these lonely evenings when, tired of tramping up and down Broadway and of loafing about in hotel corridors, Calthrop was reduced to sitting in the Twenty-fourth Street two-pair-back, his hands in his lap, and all sorts of sweet and familiar but forbidden memories knocking at his brain for entrance, that the notion of trying to write a play first began to possess him. It was born of sheer desperation in an idleness which he felt sure

must drive him mad unless something could be found to lighten its burden.

“Though I’m in no way sure that I’m not mad already,” said he, shaking his head, “even to conceive such a piece of rot. *I* write a play! A real play that people would go to see and say nice things about? *I* write a play in the face of all the trained experts that are failing at it every day?” He smiled up into the face of Miss Evelyn Berkeley where she sat over his little writing-table, and Miss Evelyn Berkeley seemed to smile back, not derisively, not in scorn of his presumption, but rather encouragingly, he thought. At least, it looked an encouraging smile through the wreaths of smoke that rose from young Calthrop’s pipe.

“And yet, do you know?” said Calthrop confidentially, dragging his chair nearer, “do you know I’ve written better plays



"THE NOTION OF TRYING TO WRITE A PLAY BEGAN TO
POSSESS HIM."



than that thing I went to see last night—lots better plays, years ago in Cambridge.” He waved his hand in modest deprecation. He didn’t want to seem conceited. “Of course,” said he, “they were poor enough stuff. I know that, but I insist they were better than some of the things people go to see here.”

He shook his head once more and waved an eloquent pipe.

“But moonshine, moonshine, my lady,” he cried. “Stop looking at me with that little encouraging smile. Stop telling me to be a fool and try to do what’s beyond me. Leave me to my sixty bob a week and my photographs of glaciers and ballet girls!”

The pipe went out, neglected, and young Calthrop sat, chin in hands, staring up into the beautiful face of Miss Evelyn Berkeley.

“‘I’d say to him,’” he quoted presently, “‘Jones, you sit down at your desk and you stick up in front of you one of those big “Horse Guards” pictures—and you look at it until you don’t see anything else and don’t think of anything else, and then you write a play around that girl!—you write the heart and soul straight out of you and it’ll make both you and her great!—you write the heart and soul straight out of you!’ Yes, my lady, that’s how it must be done, heart and soul—and your big eyes looking down at it always. ‘Write it around that girl!’ Yes; that’s true, too. It must be your sort of play—no problems, my lady; no flirting about with the Seventh Commandment; no post-matrimonial intrigues; but a clean, sweet, beautiful play of clean, sweet, beautiful love, my queen; the ways of a man with a maid and *surtout*; the ways of a maid with

a man! It must smell like a flower, our play. People must go home from it glad they're alive, glad that there's honest love in the world, and that not everything is a cynic's sneer."

He rose from the little table and tramped up and down the room, nodding his head excitedly and drawing with vigour at the cold, dead pipe.

"That's the sort of play it must be," he cried again. "There's been enough cynicism and bloodshed and vice. We'll give them a play, my lady, that shall be like a walk through rose-gardens! We'll make them laugh and we'll make them cry all in the same moment, but at the last we'll send them home with a song in their hearts and their minds going back to the love-making they did when they were young and innocent. We'll make them dream of their first kiss—that's the thing, by Jove!—

‘Write it around that girl.’ Ah, I’ll write it around you! And I’ll see nothing and think nothing, when I write it, but you and you and you!”

His smile widened as he heard the applause of those people who were to be brought back to youth and innocence and first kisses. His head went up very bravely and his step became a sort of triumphal march up and down the narrow confines of the two-pair-back.

A lifted elbow swept the mantelshelf and knocked over one of the gold-framed photographs there, so that it fell with a little crash. Calthrop halted suddenly and caught up the picture to see if the glass had been broken, and a sudden great change came over his face.

“Why—why, Molly!” he cried softly.

“Why—Molly!”

The photograph was of a very lovely

young girl. She would be English, certainly, with her straight nose and high brows and short Greek mouth, and the waving hair caught in a great knot at the back of her neck. Oh, English, by all means! She would be a young girl, too, not long out of the schoolroom probably, but just on the verge of a very extraordinary beauty. Her eyes were wonderful.

"Molly—Molly!" said Calthrop, with a little catch in his breath. All the fever and glow of ambition were gone, all the intoxication of success that had seemed, under the smile of those other eyes, so little a way ahead. Green fields and the smell of running water—scent of box and gorse and may! the sweep of hills and covert that was dear from childhood! All the sights and sounds and smells that were inalienably home, *home!* It came

over him with an irresistible rush that left him shaking—and this new life had dropped away.

“Molly!” whispered young Calthrop, with the picture against his hot cheek.

Ah, the paddock where the sheep grazed, down below the yew walk! and the river beyond, with its willows along the bank—the river, where he and Molly paddled about in the canoe or poled up and down in a punt through the reeds and lily pads, with the gray turrets of Hartwell Towers, Molly’s home, showing above the trees on the farther hill. And the good old governor, dear old governor! marching up and down the yew walk with his stick, and grinning meaningly when he saw the boy and Molly together!

Young Calthrop set the picture down upon the mantel quickly and threw him-



“ALL THE SIGHTS AND
SOUNDS AND SMELLS
THAT WERE INALIEN-
ABLY HOME!”



self into the chair before the little writing-table with his face in his hands.

"I tell you," he cried fiercely, "that's over and done with, all of it. Good God! can't you forget it, man? I tell you that chap is dead, the chap who lived at the Abbey and fished and rode to hounds, and shot, and played with—with Molly! He died when the smash came. I tell you!" groaned young Calthrop, with his head between his straining fists. "I tell you, I'm not that chap; I don't know anything about him. I sell photographs over a counter at sixty bob a week!"

He raised a twitching face to the gentle smile of Miss Evelyn Berkeley. "My lady," he cried, "oh, my lady, help me to forget all those things! I mustn't remember them; I mustn't. I'm going to write you a play, a beautiful, beautiful play! How can I do it if I'm smelling may and

gorse, and if I'm remembering how the trout jump at evening and how the sun sets behind Hartwell Towers!" And he dropped his head into his hands once more and thought how Molly used to sing "Love's old sweet song."

CHAPTER V

CHAPTER V

"You see just how it is," said the proprietor regretfully to the red-haired young woman; "I'd like to keep you both on, but there's not business enough to occupy one, to say nothing of the three of us. One of you I shall have to let go till September. You—you weren't thinking of taking a vacation anyhow?" he inquired.

The plain young woman glanced at Calthrop, who was rearranging the display of photographs in the window, out of hearing.

"Why—why, no," she said; "that is, I hadn't thought much about it." But just now she did some very rapid thinking about what the loss of two months' wages

would mean to the mother and the two little chaps.

"Of course," continued the proprietor, "you have been with me longer than Calthrop, and in case you hadn't been meaning to take a—a rest anyhow," and he paused suggestively, "I suppose I should have to drop him. Calthrop could be of great service getting that August consignment from London, though."

"Will you let me think it over during the day?" asked the red-haired young woman, her eyes still upon Mr. Calthrop.

"Why, yes, yes, to be sure," said he; "think it over and let me know to-night or to-morrow."

Young Calthrop came back from the window scrubbing at his dusty hands with a handkerchief and smiling amusedly.

"I've put Oom Paul Kruger between the Mayor of New York and the august

head of Tammany Hall!" said he. "And I think he looks very nice there. I have flanked them with some very, very French actresses in Liberty scarves, and I've put the Florodora Sextette over them. I call that a strikingly artistic ensemble myself. You should go outside and look at it."

The red-haired young woman shook her head.

"No, I'll take your word for it," said she. "It's hot outside." She tapped absently upon the showcase with her fingers and then looked up into Calthrop's eyes.

"How do you stand the heat?" she asked. "It must be worse than anything you have known."

Calthrop gave a little shrug. "Oh, as for that," said he, "one never knows what one can bear till the test comes. I sup-

pose it has hardly begun yet—the heat. I suppose we shall have a couple of months of it at the least?”

“You—you weren’t thinking of taking any vacation, then?” inquired the young woman; “you’re going to keep at it all summer?”

“Vacation!” scoffed Calthrop; “bless you, no! I’m not in the way of taking vacations. I’d jolly well like to, but you see, I jolly well can’t. But, I say, you’re not going off, are you? You’re not going to leave a chap alone here?”

The plain young woman turned quite pink.

“Why,” said she, “I—I wasn’t—I mean, that is to say, I think I shall, at—at the end of the week, you know, just till September. I’ve a little money laid away that will tide us over the summer and—so I think I shall take a rest. It—it

isn't as if I couldn't be spared here, you know," said the plain, red-haired young woman.

"No, oh, no; of course not," agreed Calthrop. "There isn't anything to do—but it's going to be beastly dull all alone in the shop. I shall miss you."

The plain young woman turned and went to the end of the shop in search of something which apparently refused to be found, but she smiled quite cheerfully when she returned.

"Come and see me—us, I mean," she said, "whenever you have an hour or two to spare and feel lonesome. We sha'n't be going out of town. I'd like you to see the kiddies. Drop in on a Sunday—that is," she added hesitatingly, "if—if you'd care to."

"Care to," said Calthrop heartily; "well, rather! Of course I shall come if I may,"

and the red-haired young woman saw fit to turn pink once more. Then presently, after they had been talking of something else, "Tell me," said she; "I've—I've been thinking about a—a sort of friend of mine who had a queer—problem offered her. Tell me how much would you do for some one you—cared about? some one quite beyond you, you know; some one you cared about quite hopelessly, oh, quite hopelessly, and—and expected nothing from."

"Why," said young Calthrop, "if I really—cared—why, I think I'd do just about anything; wouldn't you? just about anything in my power."

"At any cost?" said the red-haired young woman.

"At any cost," agreed Mr. Calthrop.

The young woman gave a relieved little sigh.

“Yes, I thought you would say that,” said she. “I thought that’s what you’d do. Yes, I think I should do anything—thank you.”

CHAPTER VI

CHAPTER VI

THE play progressed—rather unevenly, to be sure, and by fits, but it progressed. There were false starts along ways that turned out impasses; there were schemes beautiful in conception that developed impossibilities when one came to elaborate them; but after a week or so of this there came a plot clear and simple and moving inevitably to its climax—a plot not startling in the least, not weird, nor bizarre, nor tragic; perhaps not even strikingly original—but after all it was not the plot which was to make the play, but its telling.

There were evenings of enthusiasm, of inspiration, when a pen could not go fast

enough and Miss Evelyn Berkeley sat a living, thrilling presence over the little writing-table; and after them, evenings when young Calthrop's mind was a weary blank, when he loathed the sight of pen and paper and his whole enterprise seemed the maddest and most preposterous nonsense.

"That thing a play!" he would sneer bitterly, looking down at the scattered sheets; "a play! a work of art to move thousands of people! God ha' mercy, it's the saddest drivel that ever came from a pen!" And he would read aloud passages of the dialogue in a jeering tone of scorn that made them sound quite absurd.

"Oh, my lady, my lady!" he would cry, raising hopeless eyes to the beautiful face of Miss Evelyn Berkeley. "To think that I could have been such a fool. Such a mad, presumptuous fool! Is there any

good in the thing? Tell me, is there? For, by my soul, I can't see it! Ah, that I should even have dreamed of writing anything for you—*you* of all people in the world!"

And then, driven quite to desperation, he would snatch up a hat and rush out into the night to tramp up and down Broadway or the Avenue, beating his stick savagely upon the pavement and calling himself all the unpleasant names that a naturally active imagination could invent on the spur of the moment. How he grew to loathe that familiar stretch between Madison Square and Forty-second Street!

Sometimes when it was very hot and the streets were breathless cañons of stone and asphalt, where no vagrant breeze strayed, and the overused air seemed never to change from one day's end to another, he would climb upon an open street car

and ride to the end of the line, out somewhere in Harlem—that Bloomsbury of the New World. One could be fairly comfortable so. Or he would go in the other direction to the Battery and sit there for hours on a wooden bench, under the sputtering arc lights, watching the throng that surged unceasingly about the seawall, and taking deep breaths of the clean salt air that came in across the bay.

People moved up beside him on the benches and spoke to him with the easy familiarity of the American lower class; ladies of an obvious profession who called him "My Dear," and said that this hot weather did make one thirsty; beggars who pleaded for a few cents to get a cup of coffee and some crackers—none of them had had anything to eat for several days: young Calthrop was greatly interested to know what they wanted with crackers,

crackers seeming such strange things for a beggar to be playing about with, till he found out later that crackers were biscuits; and there were others of a pleasanter sort, workingmen and their neat wives out for a breath of live air before seeking an impossible sleep in the furnaces they called home; captains or engineers of harbor craft, off duty for the night; bagmen—they called themselves “drummers” here in America—who were stopping at some of the downtown hotels, and who were very curious as to Calthrop’s private affairs.

He grew rather fond of the Battery—the same water slapped its stone walls that cradled England. He watched the lights on Staten Island and said to himself that just behind that yellow glow were the green downs of Devon, and the Abbey and Hartwell Towers. And when the sky was full of red and blue and purple flashes over

behind Governor's Island at Manhattan Beach, he pretended that it was an exhibition at Earl's Court, but that he didn't care to go to it, you know, because those things were always so very, very rowdy.

He watched the steamships move slowly out of the channel toward that great space of open black beyond, excursion boats to Coney Island, most of them, but now and then a big one, high out of the water, with fewer lights and two or three great funnels aline. And these, young Calthrop pretended, were going *home*, as doubtless some of them were.

"Lucky devils!" he would cry softly, beating his hands upon the iron arms of his bench. "Oh, you lucky, lucky devils! You are going home, *home*, God bless you! home to the greenest, cleanest, dearest little island in all the great world! home to the good old sights and sounds and

smells—London fog and Devon sunshine—and the roast beef of old England—which,” he would add cynically, “you are probably carrying with you from Chicago. Home! and I’ve got to stop here in the desert and—and sell photographs!” Then he would get up and make his way to Twenty-fourth Street, very low in his mind, and perhaps sit for an hour looking at the little picture of the Honourable Molly Hartwell, and saying rash, bitter, desperate things to it—for which he would be sorry the next morning.

Still the play progressed, thanks to the evenings of inspiration and industry, and these evenings grew more and more frequent as the thing took completer shape. It grew to possess him, the play, till he lived in it day and night. He was much alone in the Broadway shop, for the proprietor was seldom about and the red-

haired young woman was of course no longer there. So that young Calthrop had many long hours in which to hang over an idle showcase and discuss with himself minor details of the thing that filled all his mind, to balance situations and to polish dialogue.

He kept a little note-book under the counter and in this he would jot down suggestions as they occurred to his mind during the day, to be considered carefully when the gas was burning that evening in Twenty-fourth Street and Miss Evelyn Berkeley smiled through blue wreaths of tobacco smoke.

CHAPTER VII

CHAPTER VII

THEN, one Sunday afternoon, when the play was at a temporary halt and he could seem to do nothing with it, he gave it his blessing and mounted the elevated railway at Twenty-third Street to make a call upon the red-haired young woman with the mother who wouldn't walk any more, and the two little kiddies who walked too much, so that shoes were an important item of expense.

She lived far out in Harlem, near the One Hundred and Fifty-fifth Street terminus of the line, indeed; and Calthrop thought he would never get there, though he found the elevated a rather novel experience, and heartily wished himself

elsewhere when the train crept, at what seemed a most perilous tilt, around the sharp double curve at One Hundred and Tenth Street, and he saw from the window to what a tremendous height from the ground the tracks were reared.

He found the house easily. It was a very tiny cottage, set between a cheap red brick shop-building and a high grass-topped bluff of rock which had not yet been blasted away to make room for the ever-encroaching tide of construction. Across the street was a vacant lot given over at this particular time to a very noisy exhibition of the national game as exploited by the extreme youth of upper Harlem, but the game was temporarily suspended to allow players and spectators a few moments of untrammelled joy over Mr. Calthrop's frock coat and top hat.

That gentleman turned hastily in at the

gate of the cottage, quite red as to countenance, and the young woman rose from the steps to meet him. She was almost pretty. In deference to the weather, she wore something white and soft and summerlike, open a bit at the neck—she had a nice throat—and with sleeves reaching only to the elbows. Her red hair, done in some softer, less severe style than before, curled becomingly about her forehead and ears. She was breathing rather quickly.

“Oh, this is good of you!” she said.

“This is good of you; I am so glad!”

“So am I,” said young Calthrop, shaking her hand. “That is,” he added smilingly, “if it’s really you. I didn’t quite know you at first.”

He looked down at the fresh white frock. “You’ve such a frivolous air!” he complained. “Such a seashore, summer-girl-having-your-vacation look! No, you

are not the young woman I used to know at all. You never sold photographs. I must be going on; I'm looking for somebody else."

"Indeed you're not going on," said she—Calthrop wondered what had evoked that very becoming flush; "you're coming in to meet the mother, and if that ball game ever ends, the kiddies, too. I believe one of them is playing at first base and the other behind the bat. Did they make fun of your hat? Dear, dear! you see they probably never have seen a top hat before except in pictures."

The mother was in an invalid chair under the straggling vines of the porch, and she turned out to be a very dear old lady indeed, with a tongue in her head and a never-ending flow of cheerfulness.

"You have put us under an obligation that we never can repay," said she, beam-

ing upon him, "by coming just at this instant. You see, the kiddies are playing on the side that's in the field, and the score was thirteen to thirteen with two out and the bases full. When they all stopped to look at you, the lad that's at bat quite lost his head. He'll never be able to hit anything now. You've saved the day." And the merry old lady chuckled delightedly. Calthrop laughed, though he had not the remotest idea of what three out and the bases full signified.

"I'm sorry it isn't cricket," said he, "for I'd like to play."

"Not in—*that!*" said the young woman anxiously. "You couldn't, you know; really you couldn't."

"No," declared Mr. Calthrop, firmly, "not in *that*. I should leave that in your care. Also *this*," and he spread out the skirt of his coat over the step where he was

sitting, to tempt a very small but venture-some kitten who sniffed at him uncertainly and, finding him innocent of harm, curled up on the proffered coat.

He inquired about the suit at law, and they told him that they had brighter hopes than ever before of its turning out well for them.

“Yes, the very brightest hopes, Mr. Calthrop,” said the mother. “Oh, and if it does—if it does—I know of one old woman who’ll be as happy as we’re allowed to be here below, and one young one, too, and a pair of kiddies into the bargain. If we win it means the old home in Danbury, where I was born, God bless it! and enough to keep us all comfortably. It’s a queer old place, with an orchard and a garden, and a white little house with green blinds, and there are syringas and snowballs and dogwood in the front yard.



“‘YOU DON’T KNOW WHAT EXILE IS, MR. CALTHROP.’”

Dear, dear, I could cry at the thought. You don't know what exile is, Mr. Calthrop!"

"Don't I?" said young Calthrop, and the change that came over his face for an instant held the women silent. "Oh, don't I, though?"

The younger woman threw out a hand and touched his arm.

"Oh, forgive us!" she cried softly. Her eyes were full of the look that had baffled and worried young Calthrop sometimes in the Broadway shop—the look he couldn't make out. "Forgive us; we—we didn't think."

"Oh, that's all right," he cried cheerfully. "I've nothing to complain of just now, certainly. I haven't had so good a time since I came to America." The young woman looked away. Her breathing appeared somewhat disturbed again.

The kiddies appeared when the ball game was over, chanting a pæan of victory, one of them proudly exhibiting a badly maimed finger. They were very jolly little chaps, though they seemed pained and a bit scandalized at the Englishman's ignorance of the very fundamental principles of baseball.

Altogether, young Calthrop passed an unexpectedly pleasant afternoon and rose to go with genuine regret. The kiddies insisted upon accompanying him to the station of the elevated, and the two women smiled him a good-by from the vine-hung porch and told him how soon he must come again.

But after he had passed out of sight the red-haired young woman sat for a long time on her little porch cushion with her cheek against the arm of the mother's chair, and stared out across the street, and

the good old mother was silent, too.
Then at last:

"Dearie!"

"Yes, mummie," said the red-haired young woman.

"Why did you leave the shop last month?"

The red-haired young woman looked up into her mother's face.

"One of us had to go, mummie," said she. "There was not enough work for both."

"And so you—did it for—for him?"

"Yes, mummie," said the red-haired young woman, very low. "I did it for him—but, oh, he must never know, never, never!"

There was another long silence while the feeble old hand played among the red waves of the girl's hair.

"Has it—been—long, dearie?"

The red-haired young woman drew her mother's hand down in both hers and held it to her cheek.

"Almost from the—first, I think," said she; "but it's—very impossible, mummie, and he must never know——"

"Poor little girl!" faltered the old lady; "poor little dear!"

"No," cried the young woman firmly; "no, mummie, I'm not to be pitied! I'm glad, glad, do you hear? I've—I've known always that it was hopeless. I've never dreamed of its being—otherwise, but it's—it's, oh, something to have lived for. I'm glad, mummie, glad!" The hand at her cheek stirred, and stirred again.

"We've only each other, dear," said the old lady after a time.

"It's enough, mummie," whispered the plain young woman.

THE
CHAPTER

CHAPTER VIII

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CHAPTER VIII

THE hot summer passed, swiftly at times, interminably lagging at others, and young Calthrop, over his coffee and *Herald* one morning, awoke to the fact that September was almost upon him. The theatrical columns of the paper were full of gossip about the forthcoming plays, and of notices of the return of various well-known stars from their summer vacations.

Miss Evelyn Berkeley was expected from London in a week's time and was to open at the Lyric with "The Horse Guards" again. She was reported to have been casting about unsuccessfully for a new play to run through the winter.

"Unsuccessfully, of course," said young

Calthrop with mock gravity. "She hasn't seen my play yet. Ay, now, there's the rub! How am I going to get it before the proper people? I don't know any of them, and I do know about how much chance an obscure stranger has for a hearing. Carter, by Jove!" he cried suddenly. "Why didn't I think of Carter before? Carter knows everybody. He's a queer sort, but then he's American. I daresay he's a very good chap when you come to know him. He ought to be here soon. He was to finish, out there in the provinces, before this time." And, like the proverbial angel, Carter turned up the very next day and took his old room in Twenty-fourth Street.

He descended upon Calthrop in the evening, talking loudly of his triumph among the "yaps," and boasting of the flood of Broadway offers for the

coming season that beset him on every side.

"But I say," he protested, "you're looking thin, and white around the gills! Too much hot weather?"

"Oh, yes, I daresay," said Calthrop. "It has been hot and I'm just a bit seedy. The autumn will buck me up, I expect. You see, I've been in town all summer."

"Well, I don't envy you," said the American. "What have you been at, just selling photographs?"

Young Calthrop relighted his pipe and took a turn up and down the room.

"Why, yes," said he, with an embarrassed little laugh; "that, too, of course; but—well, you see, I—I've been writing a play. I used to do that sort of thing more or less, you know." He hurried on as Carter's mouth opened. "It's not altogether a new trick, though I daresay the

play is something awful. You—you may remember that just before you went away we were talking about Miss—Berkeley, and you were saying how badly she needed a play. Well—I've been having a shot at it, that's all. Rather silly, isn't it?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Carter, staring curiously at the young Englishman. "Of course lots of people write plays, and of course most of them are bad, but—you say you used to write them, that it's not altogether a new trick?"

"In my 'varsity days, you know," explained young Calthrop. "We'd a dramatic club there in Cambridge, and I—I used to write the plays. That doesn't amount to much, does it? Still, it gives one just a bit of an idea of what's required, you know—the fundamentals."

"Suppose you let me read the play," suggested Carter.

"Why," said young Calthrop, "that's just what I was coming to. You're in the profession and you know a play when you see one. You can tell me if it has any dramatic go; if it's a stage possibility. Will you read it? and—and don't be afraid to slang it if it's bad, you know. Of course, if it's good, if it's worth while, you could tell me how to get it before the right people. You see, I don't know any one at all."

"Oh, that'll be easy," said Carter; "getting it before the right people. I know them all, and I know, too, that they're in a bad way about something for Evelyn Berkeley. They can't find what they want. Lord, it would be a queer turn-up, wouldn't it, if you should happen to have done something good."

"Very queer," agreed young Calthrop heartily; "but then, you know, I probably haven't. Here's the play."

"I'll take it upstairs and read it over this evening," said Carter. "I haven't anything to do. Perhaps I could make some suggestions about stage business and that sort of thing. Anyhow, I'll have a look at it."

"Now, that's very jolly of you, you know," said young Calthrop. "I'm tremendously obliged and—and all that. Seems like a good bit of an imposition, but do you know, I've grown rather keen on the thing in these last few weeks—one does, of course," he added apologetically.

"Now, I call that very decent of Carter," he mused when the actor had gone upstairs. "He's a better chap than I took him for. You never can make these Americans out, they're such a strange lot."

He paused before the little writing-table and smiled with bright eyes into the face of Miss Berkeley.

"If it should be a go!" he cried. "Oh, my lady, if it should be a go!" He threw out his arms, clenching his fists, and took a deep breath that sent the blood leaping through him. It seemed to him that he heard the far-off murmurs of victory, felt the first faint thrill of a success that was bound to come. Miss Berkeley's grave, questioning face, lips just trembling to a smile, appeared to soften, to flush, the smile to deepen adorably.

"You and I, my lady!" cried young Calthrop. "It's you and I together, and by Heaven, we'll win!"

And then, because he was far too excited and restless to settle down to a book or go to bed in the chest of drawers, he took his hat and went out into the streets, where a cool breeze was blowing and the smell of the heated asphalt and

smoke was less disturbing than usual. A military band was playing in Madison Square, and throngs of people loafed about the curb under the electrics or walked slowly up and down the nearby streets; but Calthrop, who did not care for the "Smoky Mokes" or "El Capitan," struck off up the Avenue and walked for an hour or more till he was quieted a bit and tired and ready for bed.

He was kept awake a long time, however, by the apparent restlessness of his theatrical friend in the room directly above.

"If Carter wants exercise," said he disgustedly, "at one or two o'clock of the morning, I wish to Heaven he'd choose the streets for promenading and not his room. I wonder," he added drowsily, "I wonder if he's read—that—play yet."

CHAPTER IX

CHAPTER IX

CALTHROP reached the Broadway shop a bit late the next morning, and to his amazement—for he had forgotten that it was the first of September—found the red-haired young woman unpacking a box of views behind the counter. She had not quite the frivolous and holiday air of two or three weeks before, and the white summer frock had perforce given way to something soberer, but she was never the plain young woman of the past spring.

Something strange and potent, rejuvenating, had come to her. As Calthrop had insisted out in Harlem, she was almost pretty. Moreover, on this particular morning she bore a certain brightness

as to the eyes, a softened glow, and as to the cheeks, a little flush that came and went. It was most becoming.

"Well, of all the jolly surprises!" cried Calthrop, seizing heartily upon the young woman's hand. "I'd quite forgotten that to-day was the first of September!"

"Had you?" said she. "I hadn't." And she looked away from Calthrop's face. "No, I hadn't forgotten," she said again.

"Now, this is like old times," he went on. "I sha'n't have to be lonely again. You know it was shocking dull here without you."

"Oh," said the young woman. "Oh!"

She took the views of Switzerland that she had been unpacking and spread them out over the show-case, but she seemed not to be greatly interested in them.

"We—we've had good news. mother and I," she said presently.

"What?" cried young Calthrop. "Not the suit at law? You haven't really won?"

The young woman nodded. Calthrop took both her hands and pumped them up and down violently.

"By Jove!" he cried. "I couldn't be more delighted if I'd had a windfall myself! Isn't it great? Isn't it ripping? And you'll be going up to the little white house in Danbury—green blinds and syringas and dogwood and orchard and all!—and a cat—" he begged; "please say there'll be a cat."

"Yes," said the young woman, "there'll be a cat; she will sleep on the porch in the sunshine, and she'll have a little door of her own into the scullery, and the kiddies shall pull her tail and put papers on her feet."

"That's it; that's just it!" said Calthrop eagerly. "That's just the thing! I call

it all simply immense. You're not half glad enough about it all. You should be quite maudlin. But I say," he objected in a puzzled tone, "what—what in the world are you doing back here in the shop? If everything is going so well, why aren't you moving your goods to Connecticut? I don't understand."

"Why," said the young woman, looking away—"why, you see it will take a little while to get everything settled up—there. There's no hurry. Why, I like the shop—I——" she turned toward him and dropped her arms at her sides with a queer little gesture of—as it were, surrender. "I came back because you were here," said the plain, red-haired young woman, smiling.

Calthrop laughed appreciatively.

"You Americans are such a lot to chaff!" said he. "One never knows when you're

serious or when you're in fun. You're all alike: you love to joke."

"Do we?" murmured the red-haired young woman, bending with a sudden interest over a very excellent view of the village of Zermatt with the Matterhorn in the middle distance. "Oh, do we? Yes, yes; of course, we love our fun, we Americans; we love it."

"But I," said Calthrop, "I've good news, too. At least, I hope it will turn out to be good. Now, what would you say I'd been doing this summer—besides selling photographs, of course?"

"Why—why, I'm sure I don't know," faltered the young woman. "I haven't an idea. Not learning to play baseball?" she ventured. He shook his head.

"Writing a play," he declared. "Fancy, will you!"

"Oh-h-h!" cried the red-haired young

woman, clasping her hands rapturously. "A play—a real play? Not—not for——"

"Yes," said young Calthrop, "for Miss Berkeley; and I think it's a good play, too. Heaven send I'm right! There's an actor, a chap named Carter, who lives over at my diggings in Twenty-fourth Street, and he is reading the thing now. He's going to make suggestions about the stage business and all that, you know. And he's going to see about getting the thing before the right people. It's all dreadfully in the air yet, isn't it? You'd hardly call it good news, would you? But somehow—well, I believe in that play. I know it's good. I've faith in it. I tell you, I've written the very heart out of me. It's bound to succeed; I won't have anything else."

"Succeed?" said the red-haired young woman, smiling up at him; "succeed! Of course it will succeed! Why, I'm as sure

of that as you could be. Succeed?—rather! And I,” she went on eagerly, “I shall go to the opening night and see it triumph and hear everybody shouting ‘Author! Author!’ and I shall see you come out in front of the curtain looking very, very scared, and make a nice little speech, and I shall be simply dying to tell everybody around me, ‘Why, I know the author; I’ve known him for months. I knew all about this play even before Miss Berkeley did, and I said you would all be doing to-night just what you are doing. Don’t you wish you were I?’ That’s what I shall want to say. Oh, I shall be just as proud as you are—more so, probably, for I dare-say you won’t be proud at all. It would be so like you.”

Calthrop threw up his hands, laughing.

“Heavens, what a wealth of detail!” he cried. “I say, you know, we’d best

leave all that first night business till the play's been at least read. I'm afraid my opinion of it isn't the safest one to go by."

"But this—this actor, Carter," said the young woman presently, "are you quite sure that he is all right, that he is the proper sort to trust the play to? Do you know anything about him?"

"Carter?" queried young Calthrop, looking a bit troubled. "Oh, Carter's all right." He shook his head. "No, Carter wouldn't do anything out of the way. He's a good enough sort, I'm sure. What could he do to the play, anyhow? No, I've no fears of Carter. By the way, I daresay I shall get an opinion from him this evening about it all. He said he meant to read it last night."

And indeed Calthrop had hardly come in from dinner that evening when the actor was down with the packet of manu-

script. Calthrop lighted a pipe rather nervously—it required several matches—and swallowed an anxious lump in the throat.

“Well?” said he. “Well? You’ve read the thing? Don’t—don’t be afraid to damn it, you know.”

Carter laid the manuscript on the little writing-table and sat down. He regarded the Englishman through narrowed lids.

“‘Damn it?’” said he slowly; “no, oh, no; I’m not prepared to damn it at all.”

“Ah-h!” breathed young Calthrop softly.

“It seems to me,” continued the actor, “that it’s a pretty good thing.” He spoke slowly and as if he were choosing his words with some care. “A good thing, that is, in many ways. Of course, it’s a bit amateurish and—and impracticable at certain points, but there’s where I can

help you out, you know. There's where the actual stage experience must come in. The thing is just a bit literary—you see what I mean? It's got to be made a little more dramatic. I can do that; in fact," he went on, lifting the typewritten sheets one by one, "I've been giving it some attention to-day. If you'll just have a look at it here—and here—and here—you will see what I've done."

Young Calthrop looked over the alterations and additions and his heart sank.

"I say, you *have* chopped it up a bit, haven't you?" he cried. It seemed to him that Carter had gone far toward ruining the play—that all these incongruous speeches put into the mouths of the characters at the ends of already rounded scenes, or in the midst of carefully calculated periods, were breaking all the flow and symmetry of the dialogue. It seemed

to him that the business which Carter had indicated here and there was absurd.

"Why," said he, "I—I can't agree with you about all of these things. It seems to me that a good many of them rather jar on one, but—well, of course you know best. You can tell better than I how the thing is going to look and sound. Of course, I'm—well, tremendously grateful and—and all that! It's more than good of you to take such a lot of trouble!"

"Don't mention it, my dear boy," said the American, raising his hand theatrically. "I'm always glad to lend a hand to struggling—er, genius. Don't mention it," and he folded his arms and looked benevolent.

"Then you think," ventured young Calthrop, "you think it's really good? You think it will go as it stands now?"

"I won't say it will go," demurred the

American. "That is too much to promise of any play. I think it ought to go, and moreover, it is suited undoubtedly to Evelyn Berkeley. It's pretty and idyllic and all that, but at the same time it's got genuine strength. That Mariana is a fat part; you can't get around that."

"Then you'll try to get it read—considered?" asked young Calthrop, moistening his lips.

"By all means. I wrote to Freeman to-day asking for an interview. He knows me and knows I wouldn't bother him with trash. He'll read the play all right. Of course," he went on, "of course, you must expect some little delay. Those things aren't done all at once, but just you leave it all to me and I'll see you through with it. I'll let you know from time to time how everything's going."

He took up the manuscript once more and rose to his feet.

"I'll just have a fresh copy of this made," said he, "embodying the alterations, you know. No, you needn't bother about it yourself; I know of a place where they'll do it for me very quickly. We can settle about it later on. Good-night, old man; I'm off to bed."

"Good-night, good-night," said young Calthrop heartily. "By Jove, you're a—you're an awfully good old chap, you know. I—I hadn't a shadow of claim upon you for all this, but I sha'n't forget it. If ever I can do anything for you, let me know. I'm tremendously in your debt. And to think," he went on when Carter was gone, "to think that I called that chap a bounder when I met him first! My word, if there's a better-hearted man about New York I'd jolly well like to see him.

but I don't believe there is. I wonder if all Americans are like that, always trying to do something for you."

His eye roamed absently over the picture of the Honourable Molly Hartwell and out of the window into the blue-black night and beyond that into a golden future, which was a medley of popular applause and of the consciousness of work well done—and of Miss Evelyn Berkeley. His pulses stirred at the very thought.

"But 'castles in Spain!'" he thought, laughing, and shook himself free of dreams. "Castles in Spain, my dear boy! It won't do! Stop it; stop it! They've a knack of crumbling, those chateaux. They're not built to stand wind and weather. Stop it; stop it! Wait till you can build 'really castles.' My very good chap, to be unpoetical, don't count your

chickens before they're hatched, nor your audience before the play's accepted; and meanwhile—why, meanwhile go to bed. It's a scandalous hour."

CHAPTER X

THE following week was a sort of nightmare that young Calthrop ever after endeavoured industriously to forget—a nightmare of uncertainty, of waiting, of bright hopes one day to be followed by depths of hopeless depression the next. No sign came from Carter, and young Calthrop was unwilling to ask for news. He did not wish to seem overanxious or pressing, and he realized that more or less delay was inevitable. Still, Carter might have dropped in of an evening to report any progress—at least to talk the thing over. It was most peculiar.

He fell to thinking, sometimes—this was in the low moods—of Carter's queer man-

ner that other evening. He had seemed so altered, less bluff and bragging and—natural, quieter, keener. Then Calthrop would pull up sharp and call himself names for his vague, unformed doubt. “Carter’s the best chap I ever knew!” he would say indignantly, “and you’re a swine to doubt it!”

But he was greatly troubled, and his depression increased when one morning the relic of Bloomsbury, in bringing him his coffee, said:

“You’ll be missing Mr. Carter, sir, ’e was such a nice, larky sort of young gentleman. The party as is in ’is room is an old silversmith.”

“Wh-at!” cried young Calthrop. “Wh-at! Say that again! Do you mean that Carter’s no longer in the house? Good Lord, where is he, then? Carter gone—gone?”



“ ‘ YOU’LL BE MISSING MR. CARTER, SIR, ’E WAS SUCH A NICE LARKY SORT OF YOUNG GENTLEMAN. ’ ”



"Hi don't know, sir," replied the relic of Bloomsbury. "'E left nearly a week agow. 'E said 'e was moving farther uptown."

"Oh, yes, yes, of course," said young Calthrop. "Yes, I'd forgotten. That's all, thank you. Yes, 'farther uptown.'"

But he went to the Broadway shop with his head in a whirl and certain vague fears that he dared not formulate beating within him. Still Carter was a good chap; why, there couldn't be any doubt of that. Of course, he had reasons for moving away even if he hadn't thought to mention the fact. Oh, no, there couldn't be anything wrong with Carter. What in Heaven's name would Carter want to run away with the play for? That would be so silly!

Still, for all this, a gloom settled upon

him that would not be lifted or lightened, and the days dragged.

The red-haired young woman saw that something was wrong and knew that it must be about the great play, but she was tactful enough to pretend not to notice, and did all that any one could do to cheer the man up in her nice, bright, wholesome way. It wasn't till very long afterward that Calthrop realized how much he owed her for this week.

Then one morning Carter strolled into the Broadway shop and asked the red-haired young woman for some photographs of a certain Parisian danseuse. Carter bore an unusually jaunty air. He looked pleased with the world, and his raiment was as obviously new as it was unpleasantly ostentatious.

Young Calthrop, who had been in the rear of the shop, moved forward

and said to the red-haired young woman:

"Let me get the photographs out. Mr. Carter is a—friend of mine."

The actor fell back a step and his face turned slowly quite crimson.

"Why—why *you*, Calthrop!" he faltered. "*You* here! I—I didn't know——"

"Good-morning," said young Calthrop cheerfully. "Didn't know I was in the shop, here? Oh, I told you I sold photographs, you know. I'm glad you happened in. I've been wanting to see you. You've left Twenty-fourth Street, I hear."

"Yes, yes, oh yes, of course!" said the actor. "The fact is—yes, I've gone up to Thirty-fo—I've gone a bit farther up town. It was—more convenient. Oh, about that play of —ours, now——"

"'Ours,'" observed young Calthrop to himself. "'Ours!' That's something

new. I admire his choice of pronouns. Why, yes," said he aloud, "yes, that was what I wanted to see you about. Can you give me any news? I was the least bit worried over you're leaving the house. You see, I didn't know where to find you."

The actor looked down at his yellow gloves and smoothed the wrinkles with a little frown.

"Well, the fact is," said he slowly, "the play didn't quite—not quite—suit Mr. Freeman. He—he thought I might be able to knock it into shape in time, but—you see, he's already chosen a play for Miss Berkeley."

Young Calthrop took a sudden little breath.

"Al—already chosen a play?" said he:

"Why, yes," said the actor, looking away. "Didn't you read it in the paper this morning?"

A folded *Herald* lay upon the showcase nearby and Calthrop picked it up and opened it slowly to the theatrical page. He found the notice at once.

“Mr. Freeman is said to have selected the vehicle for the exploitation of Miss Evelyn Berkeley’s talents during the coming season. Miss Berkeley has already opened the Lyric for a short run of last year’s favourite ‘The Horse Guards,’ but will produce the new play in a month’s time.”

The *Herald* rustled to the floor.

“Yes, I—see,” said young Calthrop.
“Ah, well, it—it doesn’t matter much, does it? It isn’t as if I—really cared.”

He was wishing that Carter would go away and leave him alone. He wanted to be alone for a very long time to wrestle with the great sickening weight that had come

upon him. He was a bit troubled, too, in wondering if he showed anything of what he was feeling. He mustn't do that above all things. He must be absolutely non-chalant and at ease before Carter.

"So you see," proceeded the actor rather hurriedly, "it won't do there. Still, as I said, it might be knocked into shape later on, or—or offered elsewhere. Evelyn Berkeley isn't the only actress alive. Look here!"

He leaned confidentially across the counter toward young Calthrop. "Look here, I've got my sporting blood up, and it riled me being turned down that way. I want to do something with that little play—not now, perhaps, but at my leisure. I've taken an interest in the game. Now I'll make you a proposition—What will you take for the play just as it is? I'd like to go over it on my own hook and do

what I like to it, and I've enough confidence in my judgment to be willing to pay you a reasonable price as a bit of spec. What will you take for it?"

Young Calthrop looked up very quickly. The fall of his castle about his ears, the rumble and dust of the débris, the utter wreck of too confident hopes, had dulled his senses and befogged his mind. He was in no state for acute observation, but it seemed to him that the actor was just a bit too eager, that his eyes were a shade too anxious. Still, that notice in the paper must be true. She must have been provided with a play—and nothing else mattered.

He made a little gesture of weariness, protest.

"No, thanks," he said. "I'm very much obliged for your offer, but—well, I wrote the thing for Miss Berkeley. I

shouldn't care to see it go elsewhere, even if it were possible. No, I don't think I'll sell. I—I don't want you to think that I'm not tremendously grateful to you for all you've done," he went on, smiling politely. "As I said the other day, I'm no end in your debt, but I think I'll keep the play. It was a bit silly even to think of submitting it, wasn't it? Now, if you will give me your address, I'll call around in a day or so and get the manuscript."

The actor pulled nervously at his glove.

"I—I'd be disposed to make you a good offer," said he. Young Calthrop thought again that his eyes were a bit too anxious. "And," he continued, "of course it's not my affair, but I think you would be foolish not to take me up. As it is, you'll get nothing at all, while if you sell to me you will get enough at least to pay you for the time you've spent on the thing."

"No, I think not," said young Calthrop.
"I think I'll keep it."

He drew over to him a pad of paper and a pencil.

"Did you say what your address was?" he suggested. "I couldn't think of troubling you to bring the manuscript to me."

The actor pulled on a yellow glove with quite a jerk and shrugged his shoulders. There was a slight crease between his brows.

"As you like," said he; "as you like. Just remember, though, I made the offer. Oh, my address? Why, it's 307 Thirty—Thirty-ninth Street—East."

Young Calthrop looked up from the paper with a little narrowing of the eyes.

"I thought you started to say Thirty-fourth Street a little while ago," said he.

"Thirty-fourth Street?" inquired the American, smiling gently. "Oh, dear me,

no. You misunderstood. Thirty-ninth Street, my dear man, Thirty-ninth—East. Ah, well, good-day, Calthrop, good-day. I'll be in again. Sorry we couldn't come to terms."

Young Calthrop looked after him with a puzzled air. It had all seemed a bit queer, and he couldn't make it out.

"I don't like that chap's face," said he, "nor his manner. There's something wrong somewhere. What does he want of the play, anyhow? Ah, well, *She* can't use it. That's all I care for. Carter can sink its corpse in New York harbour if he likes. But I wonder——"

He walked with bowed head past the red-haired young woman and to the back of the shop where there was a little cloak-room with a wash-stand and a square mirror. The red-haired young woman looked after him with an expression in her

eyes that would have caused him some thought if he could have seen it.

He washed his hands mechanically—he had been opening a foreign consignment of goods—and caught sight of his face in the square mirror. It pulled him up with a gasp.

“My Lord, do I look like that?” he cried. “Here, buck up, buck up! That won’t do. Haven’t you any sporting blood at all? You’re a rotten bad loser. Buck up!” and he walked back to the red-haired girl behind the counter, smiling amiably.

“I’m sorry to disappoint you,” said he, shaking his head at her humourously, “but you’ll have to give up the idea of that first night performance and my little speech and all. There isn’t going to be any first night. There isn’t going to be any night at all. It’s all off, do you hear—all off! Do you know I’ve a suspicion that my

forte is selling photographs. I know it isn't writing plays."

"Do you mean—" gasped the young woman, "you don't mean—oh, the play has not been—refused? Oh, no, no, it can't be true, it can't!"

"Oh, yes, but it can," said young Calthrop cheerfully. "It not only can be true, but it is. Chucked up! chuckled up! And all my castles that I'd built so bravely gone with it. Oh, nothing, nothing!"

The red-haired young woman dropped her hands and raised her face to Calthrop.

"Oh, Mr. Calthrop, I'm so sorry," she said. There was a little half-sob in her voice. "Oh, I'm so sorry"

Calthrop turned abruptly away with something in his throat.

"Oh, it's—it's all right," said he, but his voice shook a bit for all that. "It's all right, it doesn't matter, you

know. You—you're a dear, God bless you! But it doesn't matter—nothing does. My line is selling photographs. Chucked up! After all my—— Great God! chuckled up! chuckled up!"

CHAPTER XI



CHAPTER XI

It was two days afterward, and the red-haired young woman was busily engaged in pasting the name of a Parisian celebrity of whom some photographs had been received upon the proper file when young Calthrop paused beside her.

"Miss—Berkeley is coming into the shop," said he. "Would you mind waiting upon her? I—I think I'd rather not do it," and he moved toward the back of the shop.

The red-haired young woman looked up with a little gasp. Miss Berkeley had just left a cab at the curbstone and had paused a moment in the doorway of the shop to greet a woman who had been passing. In

a moment the two came in together, saying excitedly how jolly it was after so long to run upon each other this way and how glad each was to see the other. Indeed, Miss Berkeley seemed quite to have forgotten what she had come after, but broke off directly with a little laugh and asked the girl if she might see some photographs of Mr. Jefferson. The red-haired young woman noticed that Miss Berkeley had glanced up and down the length of the shop for an instant as if she missed something.

"Yes, oh, yes," she said to the other woman, "I've got a play at last. Didn't you read about it in the papers the other day? A play! I should think I had. My dear, it's a poem! It's a perfect idyl, I tell you! And yet, curiously enough, it is dramatic, too. I shall be so glad to be rid of 'The Horse Guards.' You've no idea how tired one grows of doing the same

play, even if it's a good one, for months and months. One grows to loathe it. But this new piece is truly wonderful! What? Who did it? Oh, that's the funniest part! A cheap third-rate young actor, who's been doing small parts at some of the downtown houses, claims to have done it. He brought it to Mr. Freeman only last week and said he'd written it especially for me. Fancy! Of course Mr. Freeman took it up at once. The thing is a genuine find, you know, but neither he nor I believe the man actually wrote it. It isn't like him at all—at least, the greater part of it isn't like him. There are bits of it here and there that he might have done—bits curiously unlike the general tone of the play, you know. They go far toward spoiling it. Oh, it's all quite mysterious, but at any rate we've the play, and we're going to do it, thank Heaven."

"It *is* queer, isn't it?" said the other woman. "You're probably wronging the poor man, though. I daresay he's quite honest. The mere fact that he's a poor actor doesn't stand in the way of his being a good playwright."

Miss Berkeley shook her head with a puzzled frown.

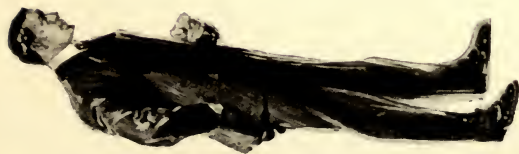
"No, no, of course not," she admitted. "Still—well, I've met the man, you know, and—I don't trust him. I shouldn't wish to have much to do with him."

"What is his name?" inquired the other.

"Carter," said Miss Berkeley.

The red-haired young woman behind the counter gave a sudden smothered cry.

"Oh-h!" she cried excitedly, "Oh—I—I beg your pardon, but—but you don't know, Miss—Miss Berkeley. Oh, something dreadful has happened!" She clasped her hands at her breast and



"THE RED-HAIRED YOUNG WOMAN . . . GAVE A SUDDEN SMOTHERED CRY. 'MISS—
MISS BERKELEY—SOMETHING DREADFUL HAS HAPPENED.'"



breathed very quickly. "I—couldn't help hearing what you said just now," she apologized. "That—that play is Mr. Calthrop's play! The—other man stole it—promised Mr. Calthrop to help him have it produced and stole it! Don't you understand?—stole it outright. Oh, Mr. Calthrop, Mr. Calthrop!"

Calthrop came up from the back of the shop, looking curiously at the excited young woman with the red hair and at Miss Evelyn Berkeley, who stood wide-eyed and a little flushed across the counter. He fancied that he saw, for just an instant, a certain light as of recognition in her eyes, but that may have been imagination.

The third woman stood near, beating her gloved hands softly together and smiling with delighted appreciation, as if she were sitting in a box at the theatre and

admiring the way in which the villain was unmasked and the hero left triumphant.

"You—you called me?" said Calthrop to the red-haired young woman.

"Oh, Mr. Calthrop," cried the red-haired young woman, "that—that dreadful—man has——" But Miss Evelyn Berkeley raised her hand.

"Will you allow me?" she begged. "Mr.—er Calthrop," she went on with a little inclination of the head, "I have a play in preparation which was submitted to Mr. Freeman last week. It is the play that I intend to use during the coming season. The name of it is—'Journeys End.'" Young Calthrop put out a hand quickly and caught at the edge of the show-case. His face went just a bit pale.

"Yes," said he, moistening his lips.

"Yes, I—I know."

"It was submitted to Mr. Freeman,"

continued Miss Berkeley, a certain excitement growing in her eyes, "by an actor calling himself Carter, who claimed to have written the play. His name was on the typewritten manuscript." She paused an instant as if to give him an opportunity to speak, but Mr. Calthrop was staring down at the very excellent photographs of Mr. Jefferson spread out upon the show-case and did not even raise his eyes.

"Neither Mr. Freeman nor I have been quite easy about the thing," she went on, "because we could not believe that this Carter had actually written the play. Still, since he presented it and it was—more than good, we felt compelled to take it at once. We had no proof that he was not the author."

Young Calthrop looked up at last, but there was no joy in his eyes nor hopefulness in his bearing.

"Oh, yes," said he wearily, "I wrote 'Journeys End'—but you've only my word for it. I don't see how I'm going to prove it. Of course I could say the thing backward, but, then, so could Carter, I expect, if he's a fairly quick study. Yes, I wrote the play, but Carter's got it. Possession's nine points of the law, I'm told."

Miss Berkeley looked at him anxiously.

"Why," said she, "there must be some way of proving that you wrote it. Can't you think of something? Wouldn't it do simply to go to him and demand your rights? Show him that you know all he's been doing. I'm sure we—Mr. Freeman and I—would do all in our power to help. There must be some way out of it. You—you might just give him a very, very thorough thrashing," she smiled.

"Oh, of course I shall do that," said Calthrop. "That goes without saying;

but it won't win back my play. No, I don't see what can be done. If he's blackguard enough to pass the thing off as his own, he'll have the nerve to cheek it through. It's—it's good of you, though."

"Oh, nonsense!" said Miss Evelyn Berkeley. "Why—why, wait a moment! Let me think. The play was submitted, of course, in type. Haven't you your own written manuscript? Couldn't you show that by way of proof?"

"By Jove!" cried young Calthrop. "By Jove! you have it! It's the very thing. Of course I've the manuscript. I never gave him that. I gave him the first typed copy and he had a fresh copy made with his corrections and his own name. Yes, I've the original manuscript, just as it was first written, without any of Carter's interpolations. That's proof enough, isn't it?"

Miss Berkeley clapped her hands. "Proof!" said she, "of course it's proof. Why didn't we think of it sooner?" She paused a moment considering.

"Mr. Calthrop," she said at last, "could you come to call upon me to-morrow afternoon and bring the manuscript? We must make some plan to catch that—that thief at his work. He must be absolutely routed and as publicly as possible. Rehearsals are to commence in two or three days. Can you come to-morrow?"

"Thank you," said young Calthrop. "Yes, I'll come by all means and bring the manuscript with me."

"Ah, then that's all right," cried Miss Berkeley. "I shall expect you. Isn't it the most wonderful thing that it should all have come out in this way? We must be going on. No, I don't think I want Mr. Jefferson's pictures now, I'm too excited.

To-morrow, Mr. Calthrop," and she gave them a little smiling nod and went out to her cab.

"I told you once," said young Calthrop, smiling down upon the red-haired young woman, "I told you that you were a dear. If you don't greatly mind I should like to tell you so again—a dear! Well, rather!" He took her two hands in his and swung them back and forth.

"Just consider for a moment, will you," said he, "how much I owe you! If it weren't for you we should never have found out—or at least not till too late—that Carter was a rascal. And—I, why, I should—I don't know what would have become of me. What, tears? Stop it, stop it, I say, this instant—though on my soul I could blub myself! Ah, you shall have your first night and your speech after all. I'm sure of it now. Come,

come, cheer up! Dear old girl, stop weeping over a pal's good luck and give him a smile instead. God bless your kind heart. I believe you're the best there is, the very best!"

CHAPTER XII

CHAPTER XII

THE maid said yes, Miss Berkeley was at home to Mr. Calthrop, and would he be good enough to come upstairs to Miss Berkeley's own rooms, to which Mr. Calthrop replied cheerfully that it required no goodness on his part whatever; and mounted to the second story. The maid drew aside the hangings from a doorway and announced: "Mr. Cecil Calthrop," and he entered. It was a big square room, rather dim, for the sunlight from outside came faintly through drawn shades in a soft golden glow that brightened only one end of the room. The rest was in shadow, so that the flame from a little Spanish altar lamp in a corner threw crimson

beams down among the many pillows of the divan beneath.

There was a great bowl of roses on one of the tables and their scent filled the room. Calthrop remembered it always by the scent of those roses and the crimson glow of the little Spanish altar lamp that hung from its gargoyle.

Miss Berkeley had been at the piano playing something soft and quaint and old, something Elizabethan to sing ancient love songs to. She had put a newspaper on the strings to make the piano sound like a spinet. She rose quickly and crossed the room to him, holding out her hand.

"I've been waiting for you," said she in her beautiful soft voice.

"Not long, I hope," said Mr. Calthrop. He was wondering if any other human being had ever possessed such eyes.



"SOMETHING ELIZABETHAN TO SING ANCIENT LOVE-SONGS TO."



They were lovelier than the picture.
Oh, infinitely lovelier !

“Why—yes,” said Miss Berkeley with a queer little laugh, “curiously long.” Or such hair, wondered young Calthrop. No, it was very improbable that any one had ever had such hair. One wanted to touch it, smooth it. One had sudden mad dreams of how soft and sweet it would be to lay one’s cheek against—and her mouth, that drooped so at the corners, and had an upper lip that curled outward ! Oh, yes, she was lovelier than the picture, though he had fancied no one could be that—perhaps it was just because she was alive, the picture made human, warm and fragrant and breathing.

“I’ve brought you the manuscript,” said young Calthrop, with a deep breath.

“Oh ! why, yes, yes !” said Miss Berkeley, dropping her eyes ; “the manuscript, to be

sure! Yes, we must talk business, mustn't we—first? Will you let me see where that—that person altered it? We couldn't think why it should fail so in spots."

She took the sheets and ran over them quickly, stopping here and there to read.

"Oh, this is better!" she cried presently in her low tone, "so much better! Every touch that—blackguard gave it was a blot. This is—perfect, just perfect! It's what I've been wanting so!"

"Thank you," said young Calthrop. "Not," he amended, "not just for saying you like the thing, but—for saying it that way. I'd have worked ten years for that instead of a beggarly two months."

Miss Berkeley flushed a bit and made as if to laugh, but she looked up into young Calthrop's eyes with the little faint smile that the picture had always worn.

"I'm glad you didn't wait ten years,

Mr. Calthrop," said she. "Ah, but we must talk affairs, mustn't we? We must be very, very practical, for we've villainy to defeat and honest rights to establish. Thank Heaven, it won't be difficult. Listen! I saw Mr. Freeman for a moment this morning, and told him the whole thing; he was furiously angry at that actor, of course, and wanted to post right away off to look for him and have him arrested or something, but I talked him out of that and explained what my plan was. To-morrow is first rehearsal, you know, and of course this Carter man will be there, but so will we, *par exemple*. We'll confront him with the whole discovery before every one. You see, he has no reason to think that his course isn't quite clear. Then afterward, after Mr. Freeman has told him before the whole company just what he thinks of him, why, then you

may take him out somewhere and—and remonstrate with him if you like.”

Young Calthrop smiled grimly.

“Yes, I think I shall remonstrate with him just a bit,” said he. “I think it would soothe me wonderfully; and I think, too,” he went on, “that your plan is an exceedingly good one. If we all fall upon him in a heap, as it were, it will be more apt to frighten him into retreat than if we should give him time for some scheme of defense. I fancy he’s more or less a clever rascal. He certainly is a bold one. But fancy,” cried young Calthrop, “just fancy it turning out right after—after all! Fancy my castles in Spain proving ‘really castles.’ That is, some of them,” he corrected; “isn’t it too good to be true?”

Miss Berkeley laughed softly.

“Aren’t you taking a great deal for granted?” she asked; “I may ruin the play

yet. I may make a failure of it before the public."

But Calthrop shook his head, smiling derisively.

"You're not frightening me a bit," he assured her, "not the least bit, so you'd best not try. With the play once in your hands I consider it a success. Your part will be merely to turn it into a triumph. *You* fail! Great Heaven, you couldn't if you should try!"

"Tell me something," said she; "tell me how you came to write this play. You aren't a—you haven't a habit of writing plays, have you? What made you do it?"

"Why, *you*!" said young Calthrop simply. "I wrote it for you, and around you, and about you, or at least around and about what I believed you to be."

The girl gave a sudden amazed little laugh.

"For—for me!" she cried softly, touching her breast with her finger tips, "for—me? Oh, no, no—you must be jok—— Why, what do you mean?"

"Just that," said young Calthrop. "I wrote it for you. I heard everybody say how badly you needed a play, a play that should give you a chance to show how really great you are. Besides, I had seen you myself several times in London, when you were acting there, and here at the Lyric in 'The Horse Guards,' and one day in the shop where I sell photographs. You came in once early in the summer with Miss Bam—with a friend."

"Oh, that day!" murmured the girl. "Yes, I remember. I—noticed you then—and spoke to Miss Bamborough about it afterward. Silly, wasn't it? I thought—of course it was none of my affair, and isn't now—but I thought it was so odd

for you to be there. You—you looked out of place—and that makes me think of something. Miss Bamborough noticed you, too, and you reminded her very much of some one she'd known in London, or at least had met there."

"Yes," said young Calthrop, "I remember sitting next her at dinner once or twice, I forget where. So it isn't altogether odd that I should remind her of some one, is it?"

"Mr. Calthrop," said the girl, leaning forward in her chair and dropping her eyes from his face. "Will you, sometime—oh, not now, not now, but sometime after a long while, when we know each other much better—will you tell me what you are doing over here in America, away from everything that must be dear to you, selling photographs in a Broadway shop and writing plays? You don't seem

to belong to this sort of thing at all—though you've written the most beautiful play I ever read. You—you seem to belong in such a different environment."

"Yes," said young Calthrop, "yes, I'll tell you—sometime, though it's all quite ordinary, nothing thrilling at all, I assure you. It's—nice of you to want to know."

"But about the play," continued Miss Berkeley, shaking a puzzled head. "I don't see that you've explained anything at all. You've seen me a few times—well?—and you had heard I wanted a play—well, so have lots of other people, but it hasn't inspired them to write masterpieces."

"I can't understand why not," said young Calthrop. And Miss Berkeley, for reasons presumably excellent, turned very pink and looked away.

"But about that," he went on, "I'll tell

you—sometime, not now. Oh, not now, but sometime after a long while, when we know each other—much better. May I?”

“If you should want to—after a long while,” murmured the girl, searching with an apparently passionate interest for something hidden among the sheets of manuscript in her lap. “Why, I suppose I couldn’t stop you—you’re so big!” she complained.

“I might take to whisky and stunt my growth,” suggested young Calthrop humbly.

Miss Berkeley shook her brown head.

“It wouldn’t do any good,” said she. “It would only stop you from growing bigger—but—but for the present you might take to tea. It’s nearly five o’clock,” and she rang for the tea tray.

“You may be as greedy as you like,” she explained when the maid had brought

in the tea things, "because you're an Englishman, and no Englishman can live without scandalous quantities of tea, but you can't have any muffins. I draw the line at muffins; you'll have to manage with biscuits."

"Ah, but you see, I hate muffins," he declared, untruthfully. "I—I never touch them. They're so very bad for one, you know!" he concluded.

"You tell lies almost as well as you write plays," observed Miss Berkeley politely. "What! another cup?"

Calthrop sat back in his chair and watched through half-closed eyes the wonderfully lovely picture that the girl made bending over the tiny samovar and the silver and china things on the tray. A ready and eager fancy had changed that tea-table to a breakfast table, and the tea to coffee.

Being a mere man he reasoned that the bewildering silky and lacy thing in which Miss Berkeley was at present arrayed would be most appropriate for the early—not too early—morning hours. And the warm colour in Miss Berkeley's cheeks he pretended had been called up by having to ask him how many lumps of sugar he took—just as if that simple question need be more embarrassing at breakfast than at tea. He was so pleased with this idea that he gave quite foolish and imbecile replies to a number of questions of Miss Berkeley and justly aroused the young woman's wrath.

“When I suggested tea as a substitute for whisky,” she said unkindly, “I had in mind your physical size. I didn't want to stunt everything else.”

“Eh, what?” demanded Calthrop. “Oh, I beg pardon! I'm awfully sorry. I'm

apt to be idiotic at times, you know. The—the tea's gone to my head—the tea or—or something," said he, looking into Miss Berkeley's big eyes. Miss Berkeley became interested in the samovar.

"And so I'm going away, but I shall be here promptly at two o'clock to-morrow to go to the theatre with you."

But near the door he paused and picked up something from the floor.

"It's the rose you had in your hair when I came in," said he, holding it in his hand.

"Oh," said Miss Berkeley indifferently from across the room, "it doesn't matter; the flower's probably dead by now. Will you drop it in the big jar? The jar is a sort of waste-basket."

"Dead?" queried young Calthrop, lifting the rose to his face to smell its fragrance. "Dead? Oh, no, it's almost quite fresh." He smiled down upon the rose gently and

stroked its crushed outer petals. "Would you have me throw it in the wastebasket?" said he. "Why, you've—you've worn it in your hair!"

"Oh, as for that," murmured the girl with a little gesture, "that's nothing to the rose."

"I didn't say it was anything to the rose," insisted young Calthrop.

"After all," said she, "it's nothing but a flower, a little crushed flower."

Calthrop slipped the rose into his waistcoat pocket—on the left side.

"I have so few things of value!" said he. "Don't grudge me my rose."

CHAPTER XIII



CHAPTER XIII

"WHAT I can't make out, Mr. Carter," said the great manager, "is the curious moments when the dialogue is downright flat. Of course we can patch those spots up among us all, but—well, it's queer. It almost seems as if some one else—" he allowed himself a keen side glance at Carter—"as if some one else had gone over your play and nearly spoiled it with interpolations."

The actor changed colour the very least bit, then he laughed easily.

"Oh, as for that," said he with a shrug, "no one is always on just the same level, I suppose. Every writer has his flat moments. It's rather odd, but do you

know that I considered those points of the play—we went over them before in your office, you remember—the best of it all? Of course, we can alter them if you like. I have—I have a slightly different version at home, to my mind inferior, but you might like it better. It's different in just those particulars."

They were on the stage of the Lyric Theatre, and the various members of the company were sitting or standing about in little groups awaiting Miss Berkeley, who had not yet arrived.

"Then you wrote the whole thing entirely alone?" proceeded Mr. Freeman.

"You had no collaborator?"

Carter looked up swiftly under lowered brows and his mouth worked for an instant

"Why, of course," said he. "Alone?—of course! What do you—— Not that I see any difference that it would make to

you, but if you care to know, I did it quite alone."

"Ah!" said the manager. "I asked," he went on, "because there seemed to be a very general impression among all who have read the play—including Miss Berkeley and myself—that the person who wrote the greater portion of this play could not by any possibility have written the wholly stupid little bits that are dragged in here and there and that are so obviously out of place. It seemed to be the general impression that two men had been concerned in the matter, one with a dramatic skill and a poetic fancy that amounts very nearly to genius, and one—well, one of a different type altogether."

"Why, thanks, thanks!" said the actor. "That is," he amended, "thanks for thinking so well of the greater part of the play."

"Don't thank me," observed the manager very dryly; "you misunderstand!"

"Are you trying to insinuate that I didn't write that play?" cried the actor.

"Are you, are you? What the devil are you driving at? You're mad! If I'm not the author of the play, where in Heaven's name is he?"

"Right here, Mr. Carter," said Miss Evelyn Berkeley from the wings. "Right here," and she came smiling upon the stage with the tall figure of Cecil Calthrop at her side.

Carter lurched back suddenly against the bulky form of the manager. His face had gone quite white and he licked his lips as if they were dry. He raised a shaking, uncertain hand toward the young Englishman.

"You, Calthrop! *you, you!*" he mumbled in a hoarse whisper. "You here? Who



W. J. L. H. H.

"CAME SMILING UPON THE STAGE WITH THE TALL FIGURE OF
CECIL CALTHROP AT HER SIDE."



told—— How did you find out? What, *you!*”

“Oh, yes,” said young Calthrop. “It’s I. Why not? They’re to rehearse a play of mine. I’m needed, you see. What are you doing here? Are you in the cast?”

“It’s all a damned outrage!” cried the actor, but his tone was quite weak and hopeless. “It’s a damned outrage! I don’t know what you mean. You’re all in a conspiracy to cheat me out of my play, every cursed one of you——” He turned toward the manager and shook a desperate hand in that gentleman’s face.

“I tell you,” he cried, “it’s my play, mine! I wrote it and I brought it to you and you accepted it. I don’t know who that man is or what he is talking about. The play had my name on it, hadn’t it? hadn’t it? And what’s more, you can’t prove that I didn’t write it. You’ve only

his word to go on. Let him prove he wrote it—let him prove it, I say!”

“Oh, that is easily done,” said young Calthrop. He pulled a large foolscap envelope from his coat pocket. “Here is the original manuscript as I wrote it without your—er, improvements. I think this will settle the question at once.”

The actor’s chin dropped upon his breast. His frame seemed to shrink and droop till the clothes hung loosely upon it. Young Calthrop dropped the manuscript and took a step toward the other man. There was a certain smile of pleased expectation upon his face. But Miss Evelyn Berkeley laid her two hands upon his arm and held him back.

“Oh, no, no!” she murmured, looking up at him. “Don’t do that! I know I told you you might, but—well, he is punished enough already. You’d probably

hurt him badly and get into trouble. Don't do it. Of course, you want to, and—and he deserves it, but you can afford to be generous. Don't for—for my sake."

Calthrop shook his head with a little sigh.

"You know I can't do anything while you've your hands on my arm," he complained. "You make me weak as a cat. Let me thrash the blackguard! I—I won't hurt him. No? Oh, very well then, but I shall lay it up against you."

He crossed the stage and stood over the huddled figure that had been Carter.

"There," said he, pointing with one hand, "is the stage door, and this is your exit, Mr. Carter. I had looked forward with pleasure to thrashing you well. I stopped awake a long time last night thinking about it, but I—I'm not allowed, just now. If ever I run across you in the

future I shall try to beat your face through the back of your head. Go, Carter—oh, and let me advise you not to take up thieving as a profession. You're not clever enough. You're a blackguard, but you're no villain. You're far too stupid. We're not going to have you arrested, for it isn't worth while. Get out!"

"Stage cleared for the first act!" said the manager, and young Calthrop went over and sat upon the edge of the proscenium box and made scathing criticisms, and had a beautiful time for nearly four hours.

It was six o'clock when he came out of the theatre and started to walk the half-block over to Broadway, where he meant to take a car to Twenty-fourth Street. Then all at once he halted.

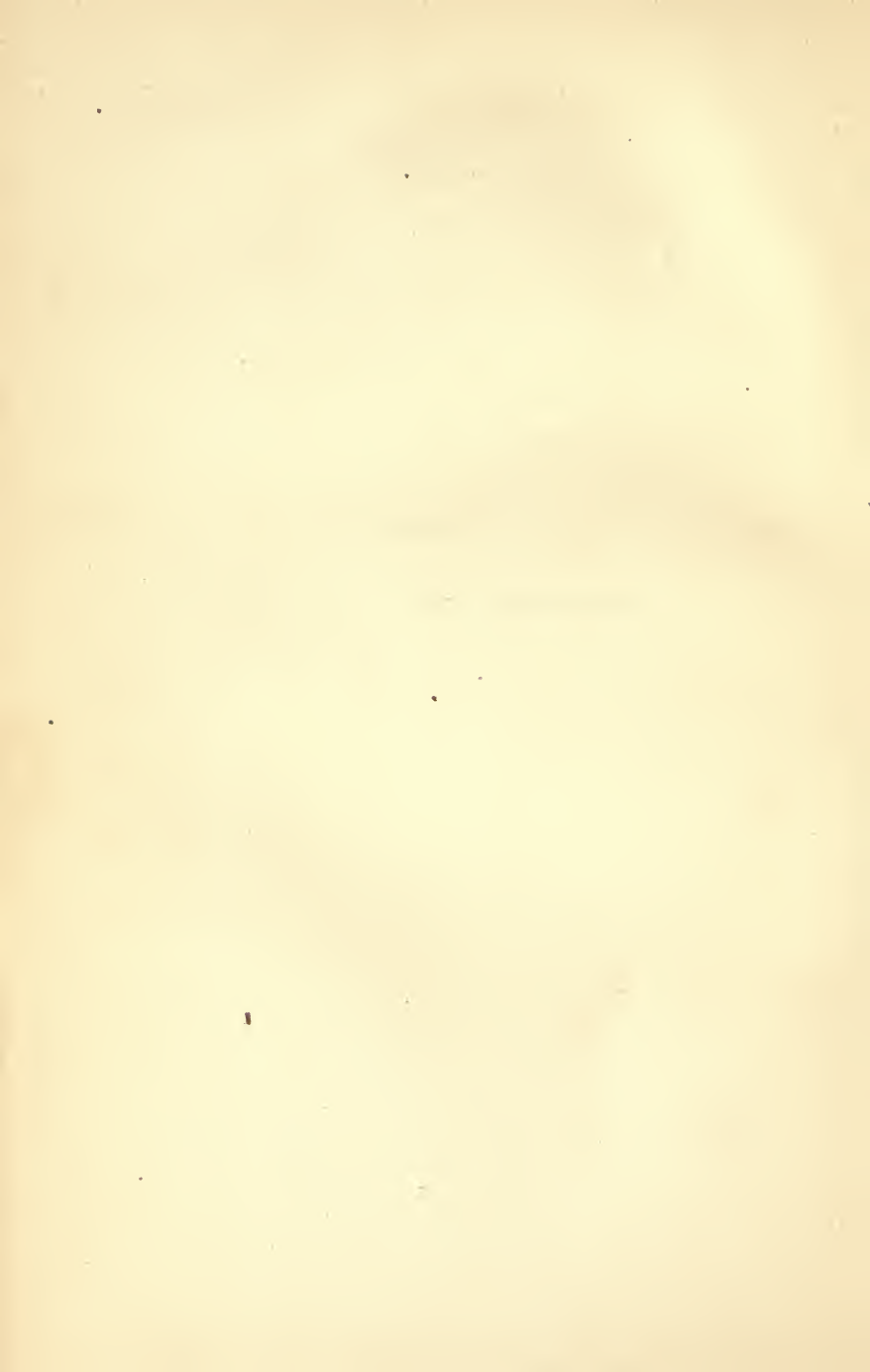
"Tram car? Tram car?" said he in disgust, "Nonsense!" He stood upon

the curb and waved his stick with a lordly air. Four hansom cabs at once charged down upon him.

“Tuppence-ha’penny tram cars!” said Mr. Calthrop as he settled himself upon the cushions of the winning cab. “Oh, I think not.”



CHAPTER XIV



CHAPTER XIV

THE next fortnight passed in a busy but delightful haze. There were rehearsals on the stage of the Lyric Theatre, morning or afternoon, in the course of which the play began to take on a definite and assured form, the business to become settled and natural, and the whole performance to move with an encouraging swing. There were frequent cozy little tête-à-tête hours over the tea-table in Miss Berkeley's rooms, which had for their excuse the discussion of some point in the play, but which had a way of leaving all such affairs in the background and becoming purely personal.

Of course he gave up his position in the Broadway photograph shop.

about something, and he hated to think of her as suffering. She was such a dear old girl, such a tremendously good pal!

Then something that he saw in a newspaper put it all out of his mind.

The only son of the Earl of Oxbridge, young Harry Calthrop, Viscount Martlake, was dead. His horse had fallen with him in the hunting field and rolled him out. "Feathers" dead! Every one in London, that home of nicknames, had called the viscount "Feathers." "Feathers" dead! and the earl a hopeless invalid and a widower! The newspaper went on to comment upon the condition of the earl, and upon the fact that in default of further issue the title would go to a distant cousin.

"Ah, yes," said young Calthrop, "so it would if you chose to ignore the personal equation. Oxbridge would marry again

if he were on the brink of the grave, rather than let the title and the estates come to me. There's no doubt about what Oxbridge will do. Poor old Harry, though! Poor old chap! By Jove, it's rough luck!—rolled out in the field! It's a nasty death."

He spoke about it that afternoon to Miss Berkeley.

"A cousin of mine has just died," said he. "I read of it in the morning's paper. He was a very good sort of chap, I believe, though I never knew him at all well. There was a family row of old standing that rather prevented our being much in the way of pals."

"Yes," said Miss Berkeley, "I saw it in the paper. Wasn't it horrible! The title will come to you, I suppose, eventually?"

"Why, how the—how did you know Oxbridge was a relative of mine?"

demanded young Calthrop in surprise.

Miss Berkeley laughed.

“Oh, Aline Bamborough wrote me some time ago what a swell you were,” said she. “When I told her your name, she remembered all about you and who your people were. I ’opes, Sir, as you won’t forget your old pals when you’re Duke of Strobe.”

Then Calthrop scowled. “Nonsense,” he cried, “Duke of Strobe, indeed! I sha’n’t ever come in for anything. Oxbridge will marry again like a shot. You don’t know the tender feeling that exists between the two branches of the family. Oh, no, all that life is past and gone, and doesn’t mean anything to me now. I am in a different world.” He drew a long, deep breath and leaned forward in his chair, smiling into Miss Berkeley’s great eyes.

“I’ve other things of much—oh, so

very much more importance to think of!" said he. "I've another life to live, other people to consider. I seem to have no heart for anything beyond—why, beyond this tea-table."

"So greedy as that?" murmured the girl.

"Yes," said he, "so greedy as that. Are you—are you going to deny me what I want?"

"Tea?"

"Why—yes, tea, and—and some other things."

"As I told you the other day," said the girl, "it wouldn't do any good to deny you tea. You're so big you could just take it."

"I shall come for it," declared young Mr. Calthrop. "Not when I'm Duke of Strope, but when I'm something much more worth while—when my play has

been a great, great success, and I'm fit to ask for—tea—and things."

"Your tea," breathed Evelyn Berkeley, bending her beautiful head over the samovar, "your tea will be waiting—for you—always."

CHAPTER XV



CHAPTER XV

THE great day came at last—as all days must. Young Calthrop waked very early in the morning and endeavoured drowsily to think what dreadful thing was to happen before he should sleep again. Then all at once it came to him and he stopped in the middle of a yawn to gasp for pure fright, and his heart began to race.

“Ah, well,” said he, as he shivered on the brink of his tub. “It can’t fail utterly. She’d carry anything through. But, my aunt, I’d give a month’s royalties to have the ordeal well over !”

It was small comfort to know that the house had been sold out for a fortnight—
“The more people to hiss and groan if

the thing's bad," said he pessimistically. "Lord, I'm going into a blue funk!" and he half emptied a large silver flask—for medicinal purposes.

During the morning he went into a large florist's shop on Broadway and ordered a ruinously extravagant bunch of pink roses sent to Miss Berkeley's dressing-room at the theatre, and, as an after-thought, he sent some out to the little house in Harlem, too. "I don't fancy the poor old girl has many roses sent her," he reflected.

In the afternoon he wandered miserably into the theatre, where he found the great manager personally superintending the disposal of some scenery, and was chaffed by that gentleman upon his unhappy mien.

"Oh, that's all right," said he, wagging his head, "you may chaff all you like, but I



"ORDERED A RUINOUSLY EXTRAVAGANT BUNCH OF PINK ROSES."



tell you if *your* funeral were coming off to-night you'd look just as interested about it as I do. I've tried to drink myself into insensibility, but drink won't affect me at all. It only makes me sadder. Tell me a funny story, won't you? If I don't laugh you can make believe it's because I'm only an Englishman. Great Heavens, only three o'clock! There are five hours and a half yet, and every da—blessed one of them is sixty years long.”

Nevertheless, at the expiration of those three hundred and thirty years he found himself standing in the rear of a crowded theatre while the orchestra played a gay and spirited air that Calthrop will never forget so long as he lives.

“You oughtn't to be playing that, you know,” he complained inwardly. “You ought to play Chopin's ‘Funeral March,’ or the ‘Dead March’ out of ‘Saul.’” This

thing is altogether too frivolous and light-hearted."

There was a polite round of applause as each of the well-known members of the company appeared, and a prolonged roar when Miss Berkeley came upon the stage.

"That's right, that's right!" cried young Calthrop, screwing about in his chair excitedly—he had taken an aisle seat near the back of the house. "Keep it up, God bless you! Don't get tired! Keep it up!" and he settled back with a little sigh as the applause abruptly ceased to allow the play to proceed.

There could be no doubt that the piece was catching on. Its atmosphere was genuine and convincing, and the lines won a constant appreciation that increased as time went forward. Young Calthrop's smile grew broader and more comprehensive. From the eager state of mind



"FOUND HIMSELF STANDING IN THE REAR OF A CROWDED THEATRE."



of a jockey who tries to push along with his own strength the already good efforts of the horse he rides, he fell into a pleased calm, the calm of assured success, of an anxiety put away.

He mingled with the cigarette-smoking crowd in the lobby between the first and second acts, and listened to their comments, which were almost invariably enthusiastic, though he cherished for a moment murderous designs upon one cynic who remarked to a companion that this sort of nursery gabble might amuse the matinée girls but that for his part he preferred stronger meat, something a bit racier.

The second act went quite as well as the first, and at its end there were several curtain calls and a great many flowers sent up over the footlights, contrary to the rules of the theatre.

"Ah, just you wait, my friends," murmured a certain young man from his aisle chair. "If you like this, just wait until the end of the next act." And he went around behind the curtain to express his delight. The manager was there, smiling and triumphant.

"What did I tell you?" he demanded, pumping at young Calthrop's hands. "Didn't I say it was going to catch them? By Jove, they've hardly missed a point, and they've taken to things that I thought would never get a hand. Success? why, my very dear man, it's a mere stroll around the track! It's a record breaker! Now look here, you clear out of this. You're in the way. No, you can't see Miss Berkeley or any one. They're all dressing for the third act. But I say, come around after the last act."

The third act, in accordance with stage

tradition, contained the "strong" scene, and at its end there was such a noisy confusion of applause, calls for "Speech! Speech!" and unstinted expressions of approval from the gallery as the Lyric had seldom, if ever before, heard. Many more flowers were passed up over the foot-lights, and Miss Berkeley was called before the curtain again and again, till at last she shook her brown head in desperation and positively refused to appear again.

"Didn't I tell you so?" said young Mr. Calthrop to the world at large. "Didn't I tell you to wait until the end of this act? I tell you, this is a ripping good play—if I did write it! Of course," he added, apologetically, "it's the acting that really makes it good. I don't mean to crow about my part of the thing—but I assure you the next act is just as good."

After the close of the fourth and final

act, while most of the audience were upon their feet cheering and applauding, and the rest were hunting for hats and sticks under the seats, he went quickly around to the wings and stood there smiling cheerfully, while the curtain was rung up and down, and up and down again, with the entire cast strung out across the stage, hand in hand. Then, when the curtain was down to remain, and Miss Berkeley was out in front of it bowing to a still unsatisfied throng, he went in to where the company stood, laughing and talking together, and told them what tremendous hits they had made, and congratulated them one by one, and said how he wished he might always write plays for just that company.

They said they knew no reason why he shouldn't, and nearly dislocated his right arm telling him how much they thought

of him, till the "old woman" held up a warning hand and said:

"S-s-s-h! if I'm not mistaken there's a noise out there that concerns you, Mr. Calthrop."

They all listened and young Calthrop turned pale. The house was undoubtedly shouting "Author! Author!"

"I won't go!" cried Calthrop, wildly. "I won't, I tell you! Let me alone! Why, Lord of—— I tell you I shall fall in a fit and die on your hands—then you'd be sorry, wouldn't you? I won't go!" But they gathered about him in an eager, laughing group and pushed him toward the curtain, while the great manager smiled paternally from the distance and said:

"Go on, go on; they want you; it's your turn now!"

Then Miss Berkeley, very flushed and

panting, burst in from before the curtain and seized him by the arm.

"Not go on?" she cried. "Of course you're going on! Don't you hear them calling for you?" And young Calthrop followed her like a lamb.

The great glare of the footlights struck him like a blow. The great mass of pale, upturned faces seemed curiously near, as if he might touch it by stretching out his hand; and it was making a great deal of noise. He felt that he must look an absolute idiot all alone there in that searching light. He felt like a bear in a pit, a bear that every one was laughing at and making fun of. Then all at once the noise ceased, and young Calthrop gave a little gasp and took a step forward to the mass of faces.

"I am sure it's—it's awfully jolly of you," he began.

"A little louder!" remarked a voice from the gallery. "Just a little louder, *if* you please!" Some of the people laughed, and Calthrop grinned unhappily.

"Oh—I—beg pardon," said he. "I was just saying that it's—it's very, very jolly of you to—like our play, and to—think of my part in it, though what the dev—what in the world you called me out for I'm sure I don't know. I—I really can't make a speech, you know—I can only say—thank you! Oh, but I say," he cried, moving down a bit closer to the footlights, "don't waste your time and applause on me—my part is such a small one—but give every bit of it where it really belongs—to Miss Evelyn Berkeley, and let me help you do it!"

He stepped quickly back to the edge of the big curtain and thrust it aside with one hand.

"Come out here," said he, and led Miss Berkeley upon the stage, while the audience cheered and clapped its hands, and the orchestra, being German and hysterical, played "The Star-Spangled Banner."

"You dear!" cried Miss Berkeley when they were once more behind the curtain. "You dear! There's no one in the world like you. I—I think I'm going to cry. But I was never so happy—in all my—life." She laid her two hands for an instant upon his breast and turned her beautiful flushed face up to his.

"I've your roses in my dressing-room," she whispered, "all but—but one, and that is—never mind where that one is. I think more of them than of all these others put together. I shall take them home to-night with my own hands."

An excited little group of friends claimed her vociferously, and young Calthrop took



Karl Anderson

"LED MISS BERKELEY UPON THE STAGE."



his hat and coat and made his way out to the street. The last stragglers from the audience were leaving in their carriages or on foot toward Broadway. Calthrop beamed on them affectionately.

"Bless your hearts!" said he, with a comfortable smile; "you know a good thing when you see it, don't you? I'd like to shake hands with every one of you."

It was a cool, fresh night, with stars and a little north breeze. Calthrop drew a long, deep breath and stretched his arms. He felt that his race was run, well run and won, and it left him with the happy sense of extreme well-being, of friendship with all the world.

The cabmen ranged along the street raised gravely interrogative fingers as he paused on the curb, but he shook his head and turned toward Broadway on foot. He wanted to walk, to breathe the clean

night air, to taste the freedom that comes from moving about after a long strain.

Once in the two-pair-back in Twenty-fourth Street, he lighted the gas, all the gas the room afforded, and filled the old 'varsity pipe that had shared the labours of these last months so faithfully. He stood before the portrait of Miss Evelyn Berkeley and bowed profoundly.

"We've won, my lady," said young Calthrop; "I told you we would win, didn't I? Didn't I? I knew it was bound to come. I don't know why I should have been so certain, but I was. We've been through some heavy seas, and we've come very, very close to shipwreck, but we've won, my lady!"

The portrait seemed somehow less ready to smile through the blue smoke-wreaths to-night. It looked out over his head with its grave, questioning gaze. The

lips trembled toward a smile—but the smile seemed not for him. Young Calthrop dropped into a chair by the little old writing-table where the play had had its birth and regarded Miss Berkeley with an anxious frown.

“You don’t mean to say you’re not pleased?” he demanded. “Nonsense, you are, too! You told me only a half-hour ago that you were never so happy in all your life. And then—why, then your friends came and—and took you away from me.”

He puffed for a time in frowning silence.

“Your friends came and took you away from me,” he mused. “I wonder—I wonder if that’s just it. I wonder if that doesn’t sum up the whole situation—if—if things were a little different you wouldn’t have let them take you away, would you? I wonder if they’d always do that!

Your friends, and your thousands of admirers, and your work, and your ambition! I wonder if I were to go to you to-morrow and ask for tea—and things—if I'd get them. Oh, yes, you said I would whenever I should come; but would I? You're a very famous actress, my lady, famous in two countries, and you're young, oh, very young, and beautiful. If you wanted to marry you'd fly higher than an unknown young maker of plays, wouldn't you? Yes, ah, yes! I might have thought of that—why, even if you'd—marry me—me now, while—while we're thrown together here, wouldn't you be sorry? Afterward, I mean, long, long afterward, when you had become much greater and more famous than you are now and had even more men of consequence at your feet?"

He rose impatiently from his chair and

took up the familiar march up and down the length of the room, pulling hard at the sputtering pipe.

"Somehow, my lady," said he, "you seem farther from me to-night than ever before, upon your pinnacle of success and popularity and fame—surrounded by all those people who know you and make much of you and tell you what a future you have in store—I wouldn't figure well in that future, would I? They'd be aghast at the idea of its including me, wouldn't they? My lady, my lady, I'm afraid you're not for me! It's odd that success should make me see it, but I think I've been dreaming dreams. Perhaps—perhaps you've been dreaming them, too. God bless you!—but I think that if I were to see you to-morrow you'd have wakened. Ah, no, a great career mustn't be handicapped. Still—to-night you said

I was a 'dear.' My heart jumped a bit then. Was it just excitement—joy over the triumph? You cared more for my roses than for all those other flowers put together. Was it just kindness, gratitude? My lady, my lady, I don't know! Upon my faith I don't know! So here's for bed and a good night's sleep. *La nuit porte conseil*. God grant us clear sight in the morning!"

CHAPTER XVI



CHAPTER XVI

HE had left orders for all the newspapers to be brought to his room early, and he read them—or at least their notices of “Journeys End”—in bed. They were better than he could have hoped, more favourable than the most sanguine could have dared expect. Calthrop had been no such fool as to imagine that the popular triumph of the night before would mean unstinted praise in the press, and he opened the papers one by one with some nervousness. One by one they were lavish of good words, not fulsome flattery, but hearty congratulations, to company and author. Some of them pointed out shortcomings, faults that young Calthrop

was forced to admit worthy of consideration. But all were strongly encouraging—all, that is, with the exception of one very “yellow” sheet, whose critic—alas! an Englishman born—saw fit to follow his usual custom and produce a would-be epigrammatic column of flippant and silly abuse—still, since this person was nowhere seriously regarded he didn’t trouble young Calthrop in the least.

“The last wall,” said he, stropping his razor. “The critics! And now the world’s ours!”

With his coffee there came the early post, two letters with tuppence-ha’penny stamps. He knew the writing on each. One was from—he turned his head and smiled toward the girl on the mantel—from Molly, bless her! He laid it aside as one saves the best for the last. The other—why, the other looked like Moxam’s



“HE HAD LEFT ORDERS FOR ALL THE NEWSPAPERS TO BE BROUGHT
TO HIS ROOM EARLY, AND HE READ THEM.”



hand. Good old Moxam! But it wasn't time for Moxam's quarterly remittance. What could he be writing about? He tore open the envelope and unfolded the gray sheets curiously. Yes, it was old Moxam's queer, crabbed little hand. No typewriters for Moxam & Moxam!

"Our painful duty," he read hastily—"inform you—death of Edward, sixth Earl of Oxbridge—general collapse following death of only son—doubtless already known to you—newspapers—your city."

Oxbridge dead—dead a week ago! Calthrop dropped the letter with a white face. Newspapers? Why, he had hardly glanced at a paper for over a week. Oxbridge dead! And poor Harry dead, too! Yes, he knew that—but—why, then, the title—— He snatched up the letter again. His hand shook a bit as he held it.

"In absence of direct issue—title and

entailed estates revert, of course, to you. Take it for granted that your return to England—not be delayed—old duke very feeble—much broken——”

Calthrop felt blindly for the faithful old pipe and filled and lighted it.

“And I’m—Earl of Oxbridge!” said he slowly, and stared frowning at the wall. “Earl of Oxbridge! And the old duke’s very feeble—much broken. In time I’ll be Duke of Strobe.”

He moved uncertainly up and down the room, frowning still. His eyes met the portrait of Miss Evelyn Berkeley, but she seemed still to be looking out over his head, beyond him somewhere—the lips would not smile.

“What to do?” said young Calthrop, beating his hands together softly. “What in Heaven’s name to do? I can’t go back there. My work’s cut out here.

I'm beginning to be of some consequence. What to do? Go back—there—back to—*home—home?*” A queer little smile came to his face—a far away smile. He was beginning to smell may and box and gorse again—to feel a horse between his knees—to see—— The eyes of the little picture in the gold frame met his own.

“Molly!” cried young Calthrop in a strange, shaking voice, and all at once it was as if he had left her yesterday. All this latter toil and struggle, all the life of this new world, bitterness, yes, and triumph, too, sweet as it was, dropped from him like a garment. He tore open the square thick envelope with trembling fingers. The faintest possible scent came from the paper. It was like the scent of Molly's black hair.

“Jack, Jack!” said the letter—and young Calthrop's heart began to leap.

She had used to call him "Jack" because Cecil was such a dreadful name to do anything with—you couldn't shorten it properly. "You'll have heard by this time from your solicitors the—news. I tried to say 'terrible news,' Jack, but I can't! I can't! It's joyful news, dear, the joyfulest news that a certain little English girl ever in all her life has heard, for it is going to bring you back to—us— isn't it, Jack? isn't it? You'll not stop out there in that dreadful place any longer, will you? Of course you won't, though—it's foolish to ask. My boy, what a time you've had, haven't you! Storm and stress, Jack, heavy seas and foul weather; but it's over now, thank God! I think I've suffered through it all as much as you; more, perhaps, for I could only sit at home and dream and hope and—wait. Waiting's harder than working, boy. True, I

had your letters. Hèlas, there were but five of them! and they helped some; they were dear, brave letters. Ah, for the time to come when there needn't be any more letters! Have you ever feared for an instant that I might forget you, Jack? Forget! You don't know me! If it had been a lifetime instead of six months, I shouldn't have forgotten one little thing, one little detail. You thought when you went away that it was forever, didn't you, dear? You thought you were giving up home and the home people and—and me, forever. I remember you told me to forget you—to think of you as dead. Jack, you ought to have known better than to tell a woman that! I didn't forget—I didn't even want to. There were things that I should have remembered when I came to die of old age, and smiled with happiness over. Ah, enough of this.

Come home, Boy! Come home to the good old sights and sounds and smells. Can you think of them now without a thrill? You can't, I know. Come home to the friends who are waiting for you, to the girl who—wants you. Oh, yes, yes, dear, and loves you, *loves* you! It's been a long journey, but it's near the end. What do journeys end in, Jack? Ah, lovers' meetings! Every wise man's son doth know. The days are very long, dearest. Come back to us. Ah, no, come back to me! I'm waiting at the Towers. MOLLY."

Calthrop threw out his arms over the little table and laid his face upon them.

"Journeys end—in lovers' meetings! Journeys end in lovers' meetings."

A maid knocked at the door with a note.

"By messenger, sir," she said.

Calthrop tore open the envelope and

spread out the sheet. There was a little gold E. B. in the upper corner.

“Have you seen the papers?” asked the note. “Aren’t they dears, nearly every one of them? I’m half mad for joy. Think what a step this is for me! And, just fancy, the greatest actor in America, the very greatest, said to me last night after it was all over, ‘You have a future before you, my dear, such as no other young woman on the stage can look forward to.’ What do you think of that? Ah, but that’s not what I started to write. You see, I am a bit excited and inconsequent. Won’t you come to see me this afternoon? We’ve such a lot to talk over, you know, about the play and about—oh, a lot of things. Why did you slip away so quickly last night? I wanted you to stay. I even sent some one

out to the street to look for you, but you were quite gone. You will come this afternoon, won't you? There's your tea, you know. Would you care to hear that your roses are here on the table where I sit—all but one of them? Come at four. I've much to say to you, so very much.

“EVELYN BERKELEY.”

Young Calthrop sat for a long time smoothing the blue note-paper with his fingers, and staring out of the windows at the two great alders that were dropping their leaves upon the clotheslines and ash tins beneath. Once he looked up at the picture above the writing-table, and it seemed to him that Miss Berkeley's little smile had somehow undergone a curious and subtle change. It seemed to him that she no longer looked off over his head at something beyond. It seemed to him that

her great eyes met his, infinitely kind, wondering a bit, as always, but very soft and tender and beautiful. She seemed to stir and breathe, as she sat there in the flaring, old-fashioned gown with the roses, to lean forward slightly toward him, and through the morning noises that came up into the room from the areas below and from the streets he could hear her voice, very low. And he knew quite well what was the unspoken message that the note on the pale blue paper bore.

He rose and went over to the mantel where stood the picture of the Honourable Molly Hartwell. He looked at the waving black hair drawn to a big knot at the back of the neck. He looked, with an old, familiar thrill, into the great eyes that met his own so frankly, so honestly; at the long, straight English brows and the fine nose, and that little Greek mouth with the

curled upper lip, and the beautiful full white throat that rose from the most splendid shoulders he had ever seen. And he remembered all he had fought for six months to keep out of his mind.

"Molly!" whispered the Earl of Oxbridge, "Molly, I seem to have been having a long, queer dream, and some of it was bad, a nightmare, and some of it was—sweet, I think." He kissed the little picture and set it down before him.

"But I'm awake now," said he, drawing a long, deep breath and squaring his shoulders. "I'm awake now. I'm—I'm——" His eyes caught the gravely smiling eyes across the room, and his voice faltered and trailed away into silence. It seemed to him that he heard her voice again, over the outdoor noises of the city, very low.

"I tell you!" he cried, setting his back

defiantly against the mantel and frowning across the space, "I tell you it was a dream! I don't belong here. I'm Earl of Oxbridge. I'm no writer of plays. I don't belong here. Fate played me a queer trick, and for a time I thought—ah, never mind what I thought! It was all a queer dream. My place is elsewhere—and the journey's over. What do journeys end in, Molly? Lovers' meetings, lovers' meetings!"

His voice trailed away once more into silence, and his feet bore him unconsciously to the other side of the room and the little old writing-table there. And he stood looking anxiously into Miss Berkeley's eyes, his hands clasping and unclasping, and straining the one upon the other.

"Can't you see?" he argued, "that I must go? Can't you see that I belong there—that my place is in my home?"

Why do you try to make it so hard for me?" And once more he thought that he heard her voice—very low. It set his heart to racing.

He sat down heavily and laid his head in his hands with a little sigh. His body and his perception of the things about him seemed dulled, stupefied, but his mind went swiftly, as do the minds, they say, of people drowning or falling from great heights, over all his life and into the two futures open to him, very swiftly, with a certain unnatural activity.

"Journeys end—in lovers' meetings," he whispered, but he did not know that he spoke. It was the journey's end in either event. Whether he went back to England, where his place awaited him among all the sweet old familiar home things—and by Molly's side—or stopped here in America, where he had, all in a night, sprung into

fame; in either event troubles and hardships were over, and the future opened fair and clear.

From London and Devonshire the home things called with a sweetness that no one but an exile can understand, and above them all beckoned Molly's eyes. Here in America lay the joy and pride of a triumph out of personal endeavour, a hard-won victory that presaged fame and fortune and—he glanced up for an instant at the picture above the table. He realized fully as he faced the question now in all gravity what sort of a future lay before him here. He knew that he could do, with enlarging experience and ripening powers, much better work than this present play, and the life drew him strongly, for he had the artistic temperament grafted upon his father's hard-headed radicalism, and he placed a high value upon

personal achievement ; but across the ocean lay that which drew as strongly, for he bore under his enthusiasm and independence the Englishman's inborn reverence for the responsibilities of rank.

The morning grew brighter and warmer. There came up into the open windows a rattling of ash tins from the areas below, the subdued roar of the elevated trains from Sixth Avenue, a wheezing strain of Verdi from a street organ, and once the sharp staccato whistle of a fire engine passing near. But the man sat very still by the little writing-table, his elbows upon the table's top and his face in his hands.

An hour later the chambermaid knocked softly at the door, and hearing no answer came in with brooms and towels and dust cloths.

"Oh, I—I—excuse me, sir !" she begged.

"I—was a-coming in to do up the room. I thought you was out."

The Earl of Oxbridge raised his head with a little jerk and smiled at the woman.

"I shall be out in five minutes, Mary," said he cheerfully. "I have only to write a short letter."

He pulled a sheet of note-paper toward him, still smiling the confident, assured smile of one whose mind is irrevocably fixed. He wrote the letter—it was only two or three pages—and directed and stamped the envelope. Then he took up his hat and stick and gloves and went down into the street. He did not glance at either of the two portraits as he left the room.

He went quickly along the untidy pavement of Twenty-fourth Street and picked his way across Madison Square toward the post-office on the corner. He held the

letter which he had written carefully in one hand, but its face was turned inward, so that it could not be seen whether the stamp on it was for foreign or domestic carriage.

THE END

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